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THE OLD ENGLISH OFFA SAGA. II.

IV.

It has been shown that the account in *V 2* of the early life of O 2 was borrowed very largely, if not entirely, from stories belonging originally to O 1. The next point to be determined is how far the narrative in *V 2* of his later career is supported by historical evidence, and in what manner and from what sources legendary matter has crept in.

Offa's reign, according to the *Saxon Chronicle*, may be summed up as follows:

1. His accession to the throne, 755 (= 757).
2. His victory over Kent at Otford, 773 (= 775).
3. His capture of Bensington in a war with Cynewulf of Wessex, 777 (= 779).
4. The contentious synod at Chelsea in which Iænbryht, archbishop of Canterbury, lost some of his domain and Hygebryht was appointed by Offa (as rival archbishop of Lichfield); and Ecgferth was crowned, 785 (= 787).
5. The marriage of Eadburg, Offa's daughter, to Beorhtric of Wessex; and the coming of the first Danish ships to England, 787 (= 789).
6. His beheading of Æthelbryht (of East Anglia); and the marriage of his daughter Ælfled to Æthelred of Northumbria, 792 (= 794).¹
7. His death, which followed close upon the death of his son-in-law, Æthelred, 794 (= 796).

Comparing this bare outline of events with the account in *V 2*, we find in the latter the following important additions:

A. *Political material.*

1. Details in regard to the battles of Otford and Bensington.
2. An account of a combination of the kings of Wessex, Sussex, and Northumbria, and after the defeat of Wessex at

¹ Laud MS only, but confirmed by Simeon of Durham (*Opera*, Rolls Series, 1885, II, 54).
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Bensington, of the kings of Sussex and Northumbria with Marmodius, king of the Welsh; and a description of two campaigns on the border of Wales.

3. A fuller account than is given elsewhere of Offa's relations with the two Frankish kings Carloman and Charlemagne, both in *V* 2 called Karolus.

4. Conflicting reports as to the annexation of East Anglia.

B. *Religious, especially ecclesiastical, material.*

1. The invention of St. Alban, together with the foundation of the abbey and a list of its privileges and immunities.

2. Details in regard to the transfer of the archbishopric to Lichfield.

3. A full account of the martyrdom of King Æthelbryht (= St. Ethelbert).

4. Offa's pilgrimage to Rome and dealings with the Pope.

C. *Personal material.*

1. His marriage and relations with his wife.

2. A brief notice of a marvel in connection with his tomb.

The next step must be to inquire into the probable sources of these additions:

A. *Political material.*

1. The accounts of the battles at Otford and Bensington have been shown¹ to be chiefly reflections of the battle description in *V* 1.

2. The Welsh campaigns cannot be ascribed to the compiler's invention, for several reasons:

a) They are mentioned in at least three works of earlier date than *V*:

(1) The *Annales Cambriae* (about 954²) alludes to several campaigns, notably in 778 and 784.³

(2) The *Brut y Tywysogion* (about 1150) mentions two, in 776 and 784.⁴

¹ See Part I, pp. 22, 23, above.

² *Y Cymmrodor* (London, 1888), IX, 144.

³ "778, Vastatio Brittonum dextralium apud Offa [rege Saxonum].

784, Vastatio Brittonum cum Offa in aestate." (Rolls Series, 1860, 10.)

MS C only, of the end of the thirteenth century (*ibid.*, p. xxvii), gives "rege Saxonum" above, and adds in 795: "Vastatio Rienuch ab Offa" (11).

⁴ "776 (. . . .) The destruction of the South Wales men by King Offa took place.

784 (. . . .) King Offa spoiled the Britons in summer time." (Rolls Series, 1860, 7-9.)

(3) The *Vita S. Oswaldi* (about 1165) printed as an appendix to the works of Simeon of Durham, alludes in general terms to these wars.¹

b) The great dyke from the Severn to the Dee, still traceable and called Offa's Dyke today, bears out the testimony in regard to his Welsh wars. Asser,² writing within a hundred years of his death, connects it with his name. The tradition was continued by Simeon of Durham,³ Walter Map,⁴ John of Salisbury⁵ (quoting a law of King Harold's), and Gerald de Barri (Giraldus Cambrensis),⁶ none of whom could have derived his information from *V 2*; and by many writers of later date.⁷

c) The narrative is fairly long (about 1,700 words)⁸ and contains circumstances, such as the treacherous midnight attack of the Welsh on a stormy winter's night in time of truce,⁹ the retreat of Offa and his army, and his barbarous cruelty¹⁰ after his second and successful campaign, which would not have suggested themselves to a monk, especially to the St. Albans compiler, whose main object was to glorify the founder of his abbey.

d) This portion of the text shows no parallelisms of expression with the accounts of the earlier battles of O 2 or with the great battle of O 1, although there is here as much opportunity for these as in the instances previously cited.¹¹

¹ "Fossam praedictam rex quondam Offa effecerat, cuius munimine vallatus securius ab hostibus suis Walensibus commanebat. Nam suo tempore iuge certamen inter illum et Walenses extitit, quod nullatenus eorum impetus vel insidias nisi hac protectione devitare praevaluit." (*Opera*, Rolls Series, 1882, I, 333.)

² ASSER, *Life of King Alfred* (Oxford, 1904), 204. MR. W. H. STEVENSON in his Introduction (p. lxxv, n. 2) holds that Asser probably derived his knowledge from Wales.

³ *Opera* (Rolls Series), II, 66. This was taken from Asser's account.

⁴ *De Nugis Curialium* (ed. WRIGHT, Camden Society, 1850), 86.

⁵ *Polycraticus*. lib. vi, cap. 6 (MIGNE, *Patrologiae Cursus*, Vol. 199, col. 599).

⁶ *Descriptio Cambriae*, lib. ii, cap. 7 (*Opera*, Rolls Series, 1868, VI, 217).

⁷ GREEN thinks that the dyke is in part natural, but holds that it probably marked the limit of Offa's conquests (*Making of England* [London, 1897], II, 198, n. 2). Cf. also RHYS AND JONES, *The Welsh People* (London, 1900), pp. 140, 141.

⁸ *V*, 16, l. 35—19, l. 15.

⁹ *V*, 18, ll. 19—46.

¹⁰ "Jussitque rex Offa omnes Uallies mares, uix reseruatis mulieribus cum infantulis, trucidari. Et quia hoc in furore ire sue, hic rex preceperat, paucis admodum lictores pepercerunt; sed ne preceptum regium uacuum uideretur, stragem ex ipsis exercuerunt inauditam." (*V*, 19, ll. 12—15.)

¹¹ The nearest approach to resemblance of expression seems to be the following: "Interim armanantur festinanter rex Offa et sui, et qui sibi proximi, electi commilitones et primicerii. Et irruit rex frendens ut aper in incendio ire sue in hostium turmas, pre immanitate iracundie periculum mortis contempnendo. Et inuocato de summis auxilio, sui prodigus se in medium inimicorum suorum inuexit." (*V*, 18, ll. 30—33.) Cf. various phrases in Part I, pp. 18, 19, above.

For these reasons, I hold that the monk, Abbot John, or another, derived his matter from a source now unknown.

The Welsh chronicles mention in 796 the death of a king of Dyved (*Demetorum*), named Morgetiud¹ or Maredudd.² The two forms of this name are more unlike each other than the later is unlike *Marmod(ius)*. Considering that the time and place agree, and that the compiler corrupts names continually,³ I incline to think that this *Maredudd* is the Marmodius of *V*1.⁴ From the general silence of the English chroniclers, I infer that the narrative was probably Welsh in origin; but from the scantiness of the Welsh records, I take it to have been a popular tradition. The point of view shown in the account of the combination of the kings of Northumbria and Sussex with Marmodius, of Offa's defeat and subsequent cruelty, seems to me Welsh; but the comments upon the treacherous method of fighting are from the English standpoint.

On the whole, the local allusions (cf. *V*, 17, l. 56-18, l. 4), together with the fact that for centuries the valleys of the Severn and the Wye were Debatable Ground, occupied by a mixed population of Welsh and English, seem to point to Border tradition (perhaps a ballad) as the source of the text.

3. The compiler, in his account of the relations of Offa with the two Frankish kings, gives a fulness of detail not confirmed by trustworthy historical evidence. But on the other hand, there are sufficient indications of a fairly close connection between the two countries.⁵

¹ *Ann. Camb.*, 11, an. 796, 811. Variant forms are *Margetiud*, *Meredut*, *Maredut* (MSS B and C of the thirteenth century).

² *Brut y Tywys.*, 9, an. 796, and 11, an. 811.

³ Cf. *Pinefredus* from *Thincgferth* (Part I, p. 47), and *Withmundus* for *Witikind* (*V*, 21, l. 14).

⁴ The corruption might have arisen from mistaking a runic \mathfrak{M} (e) or \mathfrak{M} (d) for the Roman M, if the name was ever written in mixed characters. As *Maredudd* is the equivalent of the modern *Meredith*, the blunder could not have come so readily from hearing. For mistakes with different groups of letters in transcribing from the Hiberno-Saxon characters used in Wales until the end of the eleventh century, cf. *Y Cymmrodor*, IX, 145, n. 2.

⁵ For a discussion of this question see HEINSCH, *Die Reiche der Angelsachsen zur Zeti Karls des Grossen* (Breslau, 1875), 45-61. See also JAFFÉ, *Monum. Alcuiniana*, 167, 169, 173, 286-90; BIRCH, I, No. 259; HADDAN AND STUBBS, *Councils and Eccles. Doc.*, III, 486 ff., and STEVENSON, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 206-8.

The chief additions and variations in *V* 2 are the following:

a) Carloman (= the first Karolus in *V* 2) is represented as the elder brother.¹

b) Both rulers are represented as inclining favorably to the English kings whom Offa set out to conquer, and as sending to the Mercian threatening letters, which he disregarded. The repetition of the incident is to me inexplicable unless the compiler was working from different sources, which he regarded as trustworthy, and which he, at the same time, probably confused. What these were, and how far he has enlarged upon them or modified them, it is impossible to say; but I may observe that Abbot John de Cella had unusual facilities for getting at French material,² and further that in the ninth century, at least, letters were extant from Offa to Abbot Gerwold, who was employed before Alcuin as intermediary in the dissension between Offa and Charlemagne.³ Certain it is that Charlemagne, whether from jealousy or some other motive, harbored exiles hostile to Offa.⁴

On the other hand, the one letter of Charlemagne's, contained in *V* 2, which is certainly genuine, is quoted in condensed form, almost exactly as it is given in William of Malmesbury⁵—a fact that suggests at least intention of good faith on the compiler's part.

The peculiarities here as elsewhere in the text seem to me to be due to indiscriminate use of abundant materials rather than to

¹ *V*, 13, l. 22; 14, ll. 23, 42-44; 15, l. 1. There was some authority for this; at least, PHILIPPE MOUSKES, in his *Chronique rimée* (thirteenth century; ed. DE REIFFENBERG, Brussels, 1836), 2342, 4381, falls into the same error.

² Compare TRIVET's statement, less than two hundred years later, as to his own work abroad: "Itaque, cum aliquando in studio moraremur Parisiensi, gesta Francorum Normannorumque cum aliis studiose perlegimus, et quicquid nationem tangebant Anglicanam fideliter excerpimus." (*Annales*, ed. T. HOG, London, 1845, p. 2. See also p. 3, above.)

³ The ninth-century author of the *Gesta Abbatum Fontanellensium* says: "Hic nempe Gervoldus super regni negotia procurator constituitur per multos annos, per diversos portus ac civitates exigens tributa atque vectigalia, maxime in Quentawich. Unde Offae regi Anglorum sive Merciorum potentissimo in amicitia valde cognoscitur adiunctus. Extant adhuc epistolae ab eo ad illum, id est Gervoldum, directae, quibus se amicum ac familiarem illius carissimum fore pronuntiat. Nam multis vicibus ipse per se iussione invictissimi regis Caroli ad praefatum regem Offam legationibus functus est" (ed. LÖWENFELD, Hanover, 1886, 46). For the date see *ibid.*, p. 5. It is also possible that letters from Gerwold to Offa, or from Charlemagne through Gerwold, were for a time preserved in England; but of this there is no evidence.

⁴ *Sax. Chron.*, an. 836. See also HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 487, 488.

⁵ Cf. *V*, 20, ll. 41-56, with JAFFÉ, 286-89; HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 496-98. *V* 1 contains but two words more than MALMESBURY's *De Gestis Regum anglorum* (Rolls Series, 1887), I, 93.

invention, and there are indications that at least two sources have been put together and joined badly:

a) The story of Drida-Petronilla is introduced by the words: "Diebus itaque sub eisdem regnante in Francia Karolo rege magno ac uictoriosissimo,"¹ which, used of the king who conquered the Saxons, seem to refer unmistakably to Charlemagne;² but a little later we read of the death of Carloman and the accession of Charlemagne to the throne.³

b) A serious ground of complaint against Offa might have been urged by the two Frankish kings in the fact that he had raised to his throne the kinswoman whom they had condemned to death for crime; but this fact does not appear in their letters.⁴

4. There is confusion in the account of the annexation of East Anglia. Apparently the kingdom was conquered at the battle of Feldhard; and yet afterward the murder of St. Ethelbert is introduced to explain its annexation.⁵ This murder will be discussed in connection with the account of Offa's wife. *V*1 departs from all other versions in exonerating Offa entirely from the crime, except in so far as he reaps its fruits by adding East Anglia to his dominions; and also in relating the victory at Feldhard.⁶

B. Religious, chiefly ecclesiastical, material.

1. The invention of St. Alban, the founding of the Abbey, and the history of its privileges and immunities do not require separate discussion in this paper, both because they are matters originally foreign to the Offa saga and because their sources⁷ are

¹ *V*, 12, l. 32. For evidence that the story was attached to Charlemagne, see pp. 36 ff., below.

² *V*, 14, ll. 7-10, 15, 16.

³ *V*, 14, ll. 23 ff.

⁴ *V*, 13, ll. 45-49; 53-55; 15, ll. 1-11.

⁵ Cf. *V*, 14, ll. 11-21; 24, ll. 3-5; 25, ll. 35-42.

⁶ I have already suggested (Part I, p. 23, above) that Feldhard may have been the name of the battle in which Beormred was overcome. The word, although English in its parts, is not English in the order in which they are put together. It may be a corruption of something else. There is a possible hint of the confusion in *V*2 on this point, in the phrase *in campestri bello* as used in *J*. If it can be interpreted as "in open battle," i. e., in battle in open field (but see Part I, p. 30, n. 1, above, for another interpretation), this misconception when taken in connection with the legends of the murder of St. Ethelbert, might have developed into the discrepancy in *V*2. It should be observed, however, that in *J* Ethelbert is king of Wessex. That the East Anglians were overcome in battle appears in a letter to Æthelhard of Canterbury from Charlemagne (HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 487, 488, with note), and it is possible that they supported Beormred.

⁷ Although the martyrdom of St. Alban is given in the *Sax. Chron.* (MSS Laud, *an.* 286, and Parker, *an.* 283, the latter a twelfth-century interpolation), in connection with Offa he

doubtless to be sought in early church records, authentic or forged.¹

2. The details given in connection with the archbishopric of Lichfield² are not in accord with the facts; but are undoubtedly derived from ecclesiastical records.

3. The religious features of the martyrdom of St. Ethelbert, which show considerable resemblance to the legend of St. Kenelm,³ are only incidentally connected with the story of Offa.

4. The pilgrimage to Rome seems to have been introduced through confusion of the Mercian with Offa of East Anglia, who with Coenred, king of Mercia, went to Rome in 709.⁴ For the interview with the pope I know no authority. The institution of Peter's pence and the foundation of the English school at Rome, though unsupported by historical evidence,⁵ from whatever source they are taken, are used obviously to enhance the glory of the founder. The incident in Flanders, in which Offa buys up land at the natives' own price, in order to have fodder for his horses, seems legendary in character, but thus far I have not been able to trace it to any source, nor do I remember an analogous episode in the history of any other hero.⁶

C. *Personal material.*

1. In regard to Offa's marriage and relations with his queen, very few facts are known:

a) Her name Cynethryth (Cyneðryð)⁷ is attached to some

is mentioned, *an.* 793, only in the Latin text of the twelfth-century MS Domitian A VIII (EARLE-PLUMMER, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles* [Oxford, 1892], 56, n. 1). Although Offa undoubtedly gave land to the abbey (see BIRCH, I, Nos. 264, 267; HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 469, 470), there is no evidence to show that the details in *V* 2 came into existence before the twelfth century.

¹ The compiler indeed admits that there was little material concerning St. Alban: "*Sed tantum in codicibus historiarum et relatu senum, cum paucis uestigiis representata*" (*V*, 27, ll. 3, 4). For evidence of the forging of charters at St. Albans, in the twelfth century, see *Gest. Abb.*, I, 222 ff.

² See HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 446, 447, notes c, d, e.

³ See pp. 15, 20 ff., below.

⁴ *Sax. Chron.*, *an.* 709. A later hand inserts into the margin of fol. 9, MS Nero D 1: "*Choered et Offa reges Anglorum Romam peragunt ibique in monachos attonsi ultimos dies suos regi regum fideliter militantes clausurunt. . . .*" This seems to be intended as a correction. The confusion of these two kings is not limited to the compiler. See BIRCH, I, No. 79 and No. 123, 123 A, 123 B. In these two spurious charters, the first dated 692, the second 704-9, Offa is called *rex Merciorum*.

⁵ See STEVENSON, *Asser's Life of Alfred*, 211, n. 2, and 243, 244.

⁶ For the probable reason of its introduction into *V*, see Part I, p. 13, n. 2, above.

⁷ Kineswiða, BIRCH, I, p. 311; Osenedred, BIRCH, I, p. 300.

twenty charters between the years 765 and 790.¹ Some of these may be spurious, as are probably two others with her signature, dated in the reign of Ecgferth.²

b) Hickes published engravings of two coins bearing her name, one of which shows a beautifully drawn woman's head (perhaps a portrait), while the other has a man's head with a strong likeness to one on a third coin representing Offa.³ The fact that she is the only pre-Conquest queen whose name appears on coins was taken by Lappenberg⁴ as evidence of her arrogance; but surely this fact, unsupported by others tending to the same conclusion, may be interpreted in a variety of ways, as, for instance, that she was especially honored by her husband, or that he admitted her to a larger share in the government than was customary.⁵

c) In the famous St. Denis charter, Offa says that the grant is made "una cum voluntate meae congigis."⁶

d) Alcuin in letters to Ecgferth and others, between 786 and 796 several times alludes to the queen (though not by name) and sends messages of affection and respect. He particularly advises Ecgferth to imitate her in charity and piety.⁷

¹ BIRCH, I, pp. 286-362. All but one granted by Offa. This one (BIRCH, I, No. 197) was granted by Alduulf, king of Sussex, and has the signatures of both Offa and Cynethryth.

² BIRCH, I, Nos. 280, 281.

³ *Thesaurus* (Oxford, 1705), III (*Numismata*), p. 168, Tables III, VIII, and IX, and pp. 173, 181.

⁴ *Geschichte von England*, ed. 1834, I, p. 231.

⁵ If *EOBA* on the reverse of the coin (HICKES, *loc. cit.*) is the name of the noble who issued the money, still less is Lappenberg's conclusion warranted. But although there are various names resembling this, the nearest I have found is *Eobe*, whose signature as *abbas* occurs in a charter (BIRCH, I, No. 157), dated 723/737.

⁶ BIRCH, I, p. 361. Is it perhaps significant that the only genuine charter in the text of which Offa mentions his queen (the Chertsey document, BIRCH, I, No. 251, in which occurs the phrase "veneranda Cynedriþa regina mea" together with the names of four daughters, only two of whom can be proved ever to have existed, is questionable) should be concerned with a grant to the great French abbey of St. Denis? Certainly this fact, if it implies her special interest in the deed, bears out the legend of her French origin; but the substance of the legend itself and the Saxon character of her name nullify the suggestion in the charter.

⁷ "Saluta quoque ill. dominam et dispensatricem domus regiae. Vivat illa felix et in prole paterne beatitudinis gaudens." (JAFFÉ, 292.)

Saluta, obsecro, domnam reginam ex meae parvitatibus nomine. Scripsissem, exhortatorias illi litteras, si illi propter occupationes regis meos apices legere licuisset. Sciat tamen certissime, me sibi quoque dominae, quantum valeo, fidelem esse." (JAFFÉ, 268.)

"Ecce quam nobilissimis natus es parentibus, quam magna enutritus cura. Noli moribus esse degener, qui nativitate generosus existis. Disce diligenter illorum exempla: a

e) There is good reason for believing that she survived her husband for at least two years. Aside from the fact that Alcuin alludes to her within a few months of Offa's death,¹ there is extant an agreement for the exchange of lands in 798 between Æthelhard, archbishop of Canterbury, and one Cynedrytha, abbess of Cookham,² who on the strength of evidence in the document itself may be almost certainly identified as Offa's queen.

(1) The convent of which she was head belonged originally to Canterbury; but its charters having been stolen and given to Cynewulf of Wessex, it was acquired by that king, from whom it was afterwards taken by Offa. The agreement continues of Offa: "quanto tempore vixit detinuit, et absque litterarum testimonio suis post se heredibus reliquit." But the stolen charters were afterward returned by Cynewulf to Canterbury; hence the archbishop was willing to give them up and resign the convent in exchange for certain other lands that he wished. If Offa had left the convent to his heirs, it is strange that with two of his daughters probably alive (Eadburg certainly),³ the only parties to the agreement should have been the archbishop and Cynedrytha, unless the abbess was no other than the queen.

(2) Of the lands in Kent for which Æthelhard was willing to give up the Cookham charters and to add the convent of "Pectanega" in Mercia, left by Ecgferth to Canterbury, the agreement says: "rex Offa sibi viventi conscribere fecit suisque heredibus post eum, et post eorum cursum vitae ecclesiae quae sita est apud Beodeford consignari praecepit." It is difficult to see how the abbess Cynedrytha could have had the giving of these lands except as Offa's heir.

patre auctoritatem, a matre pietatem; ab illo regere populum per iustitiam, ab ista conpati miseris per misericordiam: ab utroque christianae religionis devotionem, orationum instantiam, elymosinarum largitatem et totius vitae sobrietatem." (JAFFÉ, 267.) This letter is dated by Jaffé 786-96; but, whether written before or after the murder of St. Ethelbert, his death might still be made to accord with Offa's character for justice rather than with the queen's for charity and piety. In *V*, 25, ll. 10, 11, the queen's *impietatem* is stressed.

¹ In a letter written after April 18, 796 (JAFFÉ, 292).

² BIRCH, I, No. 291; HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 512, 513.

³ It was not until four years later that Eadburg fled into exile (cf. *Sax. Chron.*, an. 800 = 802), and ASSER's *Life of Alfred* (ed. STEVENSON), 12-14. Ælfred had probably gone into a convent at this time. Cf. JAFFÉ, 293-95.

(3) The purpose of the agreement, as stated by Æthelhard, was: "quatinus nulla in posterum inter nos heredesque nostros et Offae Regis surgat contraversia." Seemingly to this end, there were present representatives of the church of Bedford as well as of Canterbury; but the actual parties to the agreement seem to have been Æthelhard and Cynedrytha.

Putting together these few facts, we must conclude that Cynethryth was perhaps a woman of strong character, certainly pious and charitable; that she seems to have retained Alcuin's esteem after the date assigned to the murder of Ethelbert, while there is good evidence to show that she after her husband's death took the course which was most natural and frequent in her day—a course apparently followed by both her daughters when they were left widows—entered a convent. Hence there is no historic basis whatever for the elaborate narrative told of her in *V*2. Its sources must be sought elsewhere.

2. The allusion to Offa's tomb (cf. Part I, p. 5, above) reads like a local tradition. Perhaps Offa's tomb was really washed away in a flood of the Ouse; but its appearance and disappearance, with the romantic touch that to the seeker "*acsi res fatalis esset, non inuenitur*," suggests that the tale arose under the influence of similar Celtic stories of magic. It may be that the compiler had visited the spot and heard the story from the "summer bathers" who had sought and could not find the tomb. The tradition, with its direct and personal note, seems to stand apart from the other sources of *V*, to which it shows no relation whatever.

V.

It has been shown that the Drida-Petronilla story does not connect well with the matters related of Charlemagne.¹ It is possible to go a step further and show that the tale is in several respects self-contradictory. For example, the queen's reasons for wishing to murder Ethelbert do not accord with the earlier account of her banishment. It is incredible that she should have wished to overthrow the dominion of Offa, her benefactor, for the sake of the kinsman who had turned her adrift to

¹ See p. 4, above.

die;¹ and even if this could be believed, her murder of Ethelbert is represented as an act of pointless spite because she had failed in her project of marrying her daughter to her "friend across the sea." Indeed, it would seem that she wreaked her anger upon him solely because he was chosen by Offa and his councilors to be her son-in-law. Again, in the early account, Offa is said to have had two children, a daughter and a son whom he called Egfridus, within the first two years of marriage;² and there is no mention of other children. In the narrative that concerns St. Ethelbert, three daughters are mentioned. Two are not named, the wives of Brithricus of Wessex and Atheldredus of Northumbria; the third is Ælfleda, who was to have married Ethelbert (in this text called Albertus (Ælbertus)).³

These facts, when taken in connection with the double naming of the heroine (Drida and Petronilla),⁴ with the compiler's clumsy attempt to identify Drida with Cyneðryð,⁵ and with the total lack of evidence to show that Cyneðryð was guilty of any crime, seem to point to at least two distinct sources for this part of the text, aside from the possible use of some historical material:

1. A tale of an exiled princess connected with Charlemagne.
2. A tale of a wicked queen who murdered St. Ethelbert.

In endeavoring to disentangle these, I find it convenient to adopt the following order of topics:

A. *The source of the account of St. Ethelbert's death.*

1. Its character and content.
2. Its variations from other versions.
3. Its historical basis.
4. Its analogy to the Kenelm legend.
5. Its attachment to Cynethryth.

B. *The sources of the tale of the exiled princess.*

1. The analogy of the Drida tale to the tale of Thrytho in *Beowulf*.

¹ "Ipsas enim puellas filias suas, ultramarinis alienigenis, in regis supplantacionem et regni Merciorum perniciem, credidit tradidisse maritandas;" and "terciam filiam suam ad uoluntatem suam alicui transmarino amico suo, in regni subuersionem quod certissime sperauerat dare nuptui cum non preualuisset . . ." (V, 23, ll. 32, 33, 44-46).

² V, 13, ll. 15, 16.

³ V, 23, ll. 4-13, and ll. 32-48.

⁴ "Que se Petronillam nominauit" (V, 13, l. 15).

⁵ "Que prius Drida, postea uero Quendrida, id est Regina Drida, quia regi ex insperato nupsit, est appellata" (V, 23, ll. 25, 26).

2. The meaning of the two versions in *Beowulf*.
3. The historic basis—the tale of Eadbarg—on which the Thrytho myth became attached to Cynethryth.
4. The historic basis—an episode in the life of Bertha—on which Charlemagne was introduced into the narrative.
- A. The source of the account of St. Ethelbert's death.

1. It is clear that a legend of St. Ethelbert's martyrdom furnished the compiler with some account of Cynethryth's wickedness.

Two versions of this saint's life are known today: one given in a *Chronicon* of uncertain date, attributed to "John of Bromton;" the other in the collection of saints' lives formerly known as Capgrave's, now published under the title *Nova Legenda Anglie (NLA)*.¹ These two versions are apparently not earlier than the fourteenth century; but both go back to sources much earlier. Bromton's account (*Br*) does not vary greatly from a lost *Vita S. Ethelberti*, written by Gerald de Barri in the twelfth century;² *NLA*, as far as I have been able to examine, shows resemblances to certain saints' lives that existed at St. Albans at least as early as the end of the twelfth century.³ Hence in the case of St. Ethelbert it is clear that there were at least two versions as early as that time. But *Br* alludes distinctly to another version: "Et sicut quaedam aliae referuntur historiae in juvenem regem *Ethelbertum*," etc.⁴ He then proceeds to give a brief account that varies from his own long narration, from *NLA*, and from *V2*.

But this part of *V2* in itself is not a consistent whole. The incident of the beheading of the corpse and the miracle wrought by the head is not written in the main body of the text, but inserted by a contemporary hand in a space intended originally for an illustration.⁵ That it is an interpolation is shown by a

¹ By HORSTMANN (Oxford, 1901), who attributes the original collection to John of Tyne-mouth (I, pp. ix, xxxiii ff.).

² Gir. Camb., *Opera*, Rolls Series, 1861, I, 378, 415, 416, 421. The *Vita S. Ethelberti* was known to the Bollandists, who, in preferring *Br*, printed also the chief variations between the two (*ibid.*, 1863, III, 407-20). The differences seem to be unimportant.

³ See also Part I, pp. 6, 7, above.

⁴ TWYSDEN, *Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores X* (London, 1652), col. 751, ll. 67 ff. This account contains a feature peculiar to itself. See p. 21, below.

⁵ The illustration may have been erased (although I see no sign of erasure), as this page (fol. 20) is the only one on which a drawing is lacking. The text from *suscepit to sequeretur* (*V*, 24, ll. 38, 39) is crowded into the margin. From [*P*]orro to *Herefordensi* it (ll. 39-57) is written in the place of the illustration. A space is left for the P which was evidently to have been illuminated.

discrepancy: the inserted passage states that the saint's head was revealed by a miracle and enshrined at Hereford, but that the burial-place of his body is unknown; the text itself says nothing of the head, but tells how Humbert demanded the body from Offa and buried it honorably at Lichfield, whence it was subsequently translated to Hereford.¹ This addition is much shorter than the accounts in *Br* and *NLA* and varies in its details. It may belong to the St. Albans legend upon which *V2* was perhaps based, but is more probably drawn from a fourth source to which the compiler had not access.² It is clear at least that he had abundant material from which to choose. Judging from the extant versions, we may conclude that the substance of the legend contained little more than a detailed description of the martyrdom, together with certain miraculous prognostications and accompaniments and a brief allusion to the punishment of the wicked queen.

2. However, *V2* departs from the other accounts in several important particulars:

a) The queen does not succeed in persuading Offa; hence, is alone guilty of the crime.³

b) There is no mention of the traitor Winebertus (Guymerbertus, Gwymbertus) who in *Br* and *NLA* actually does the deed.⁴

c) In *V2* Ethelbert is thrown through a trap-door into a deep pit and smothered by the bed-clothes and curtains thrown upon him, while in *NLA* he is bound and then beheaded in the king's presence⁵ (in *Br* his head is brought to the king and queen).

d) In *V2* the queen is banished by Offa to a remote and solitary place and is there attacked by robbers for her wealth and

¹ Cf. *V*, 24, ll. 40-57, and 25, ll. 25-33.

² It seems unlikely that he would have omitted this opportunity to blacken Cynethryth's character still further, if he had known of the incident.

³ Cf. *V*, 23, ll. 43, 44, and 51; and *NLA*, I, 415, ll. 2 ff. Her alleged excuse in all three cases is that Ethelbert, as soon as he is married, will try to dethrone his father-in-law. In *V2* alone she adds the detail: "Et te cupit iam senescentem, cum sit juvenis et elegans, de regno supplantando precipitare; et posterum suorum, immo et multorum, ut iactitat, quos regnis et possessionibus uiolenter et iniuste spoliasti, iniurias uindicare. In cuius rei fidem michi a meis amicis significatum est, quod regis Karoli multis muneribus et nunciis oculitis intermeantibus, implorat ad hoc patrociniū: se spondens ei fore tributarium." (*V*, 23, l. 56-24, l. 3.) This is especially interesting in view of the probability that Charlemagne may have protected East Anglian exiles (HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 487, 488 with note).

⁴ Cf. *NLA*, I, 415, ll. 34-41, and 416, ll. 29-31, with *Br*, col. 751, ll. 34-39 and 54-60.

⁵ Cf. *V*, 24, ll. 23-57, with *NLA*, I, 416, ll. 11, 17, 18, 29-31, and *Br*, col. 751, ll. 57-61.

murdered by being thrown into her own well,¹ while according to *Br* and *NLA* she dies after three months, apparently mad; at least, being driven by a demon to bite out her own tongue.²

It is noteworthy that *Br* and *NLA*, while they relate practically the same details in almost the same order, yet show no resemblances in language. They are indeed so different as to suggest at once that they represent two separate translations from the same source (an English account?). If this be true, it may explain some of the variations in *V2*, while the compiler's anxiety to glorify his hero may account for the clearing of Offa entirely from any share in the murder. The meaning of the other variations will be discussed in connection with Cynethryth.³

3. The only early evidence for the martyrdom is the bare statement in the *Chronicle* that Offa had Ethelbert beheaded. With one exception the later chroniclers up to the end of the twelfth century, who mention the event, agree in laying the entire blame upon Offa. The one exception is Florence of Worcester, who (before 1118) says of St. Ethelbert:

Ægelberhtus Offae, praepotentis regis Merciorum, detestanda jussione, suaeque conjugis Cynethrythe reginae nefaria persuasione, regno vitaeque privatus est capitis abscissione.⁴

This quotation shows plainly that the legend of Cynethryth's participation in the murder existed at least as early as the beginning of the twelfth century. But Ethelbert was regarded as a saint and martyr certainly a hundred years earlier, for in the *Hyde Register* (dated not long after the year 1000) we find under the heading, "Her cyð ymbe þa Halgan þe on Angel Cynne Restað,"⁵ the entry:

Donne resteð sancte Æðelbyrht æt þam bisceopstole æt Hereforda neah þære éá pæge.⁶

¹ She alone digs a pit for Ethelbert. Perhaps here the change was suggested by the biblical idea, "He that digs a pit for another," etc.

² Cf. *V*, 25, ll. 10-21, with *NLA*, I, 416, l. 43-417, l. 5, and with *Br*, col. 752, ll. 23-29.

³ See pp. 20 ff., 26 ff., below.

⁴ *Chronicon ex Chronicis* (Eng. Hist. Soc., 1848), I, 62, 63, *an.* 793. Florence may have been influenced in his attitude by Offa's donations to Worcester (BIRCH, I, 187, 209, 261). On this point cf. STEVENSON's *Asser*, 205, n. 2.

⁵ *Liber Vitae* (Hampshire Record Soc.), 1892, 83.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 89.

From this it is clear that some legend of St. Ethelbert was known as early as the end of the tenth century; but as to its character, the date of its origin, and its historic basis, evidence is lacking.

4. At this point, however, mention must be made of another legend, that of St. Kenelm, which shows a curious relationship to the story of Ethelbert. The resemblances are these:

a) Each saint, by the ambition and malice of a wicked kinswoman, was treacherously lured to his death and beheaded.¹

b) The murderess in each case perished miserably by supernatural intervention.²

c) Each saint had divine foreknowledge of his death in a dream or vision in which a beautiful tree was cut down and he himself was turned into a bird and flew up a column of light to heaven.³

¹ Cf. *NLA*, I, 415, ll. 2 ff., and II, 110, ll. 5 ff.

² The death of Offa's queen is prophesied, in *Br*, by her daughter, as follows: "Et primo de filio suo *Egfrido* per triennium non victuro regnoque ipsius non stabiliendo. De ipsa eciam regina turpi morte in brevi moritura, & ultra tres menses non victura, & ante mortem suam daemonibus arripienda, & linguam suam dentibus propriis corrodenda. Quae omnia sicut praedicta fuerant postea evenerunt" (col. 752, ll. 23-29); in *NLA*: "pleraque matri suae futura predixit, quae sibi postmodum contigisse manifestum fuit. 'Triennio, inquit, post hunc diem non viuet filius tuus, nec stabilietur regnum illius. Tu autem ipsa plus quam mensibus tribus in confessione dei non viues, et linguam tuam, a demonio vexata corrode[n]s, morte pessima morieris; ruet iuuentus filii tui, nec diu viuet Egfridus post mortem Ethelberti'" (I, 416, l. 42-417, l. 5).

The death of Quendrida is described in *Br*: "Cum autem impiissima *Quendreda* eodem tempore quo corpus fratenum sic cum gaudio ad ecclesiam WYNCHECUMBE translatus foret, circa incantationes, ut communiter dicitur, cum illo psalmo psalterii *Deus laudem*, vacaret, manifesta divina ultione pupillae amborum oculorum ejus super ipsum psalterium (quod in memoriam rei gestae in dicta ecclesia monasterii WYNCHECUMBE usque hodie servatur) a capite evolabant. Quae sic excaecata, & post multos cruciatus pessima morte defuncta, pluribus ac locis sepulta, nusquam remanere potuit, donec angelica revelatione in quendam semotam profunditatem miserabiliter projecta fuit" (col. 778, ll. 18-30); in *NLA*: "Stabat tunc Quendreda in solario quodam, et multitudinem respiciens cum triumpho fraterne glorie venientem, ira et indignatione cepit tabescere. Accepto autem psalterio, quodam prestigio, non cantare pro illo studuit sed incantare contra illum centesimum octauum psalmum, quatinus a fine ad caput, ab ultimo versu ad primum peruertendo eum, fraterne felicitati efficeret perniciosum. Veruntamen in ipsam redundauit, deo volente, maledictum suum. Cum enim a fine ascendendo hunc versum volueret ore venefico 'hoc opus eorum qui detrahunt mihi apud dominum,' continuo sibi vtrique oculi suis sedibus extirpati, super ipsam quam legebat paginam ceciderunt. Adhuc autem ipsum psalterium argento paratum, huius correctionis cruore maculatum, prebet iudicium. Ipsa vero infelix post paululum interiiit. Quam ferunt nec in ecclesia nec in campo sepultam posse teneri; sed quendam infantem lucidissimum apparentem cuidam iussisse in quodam profundo loco semoto eam proici" (*ibid.*, II, 112, ll. 17-32).

³ Cf. *NLA*, I, 413, l. 38-414, l. 15, and II, 110, ll. 12-21. GERALD DE BARRI's *Vita S. Ethelberti* has only the vision of a falling house (Gir. Camb., *Opera*, III, 413, §5, and 415, §(d), which in the Ethelbert (not the Kenelm) immediately precedes (*NLA*, I, 413, ll. 33-38).

Passing by less striking resemblances,¹ we are bound to conclude that the legend of the one saint has borrowed from the other; or, it may be, that each has borrowed features belonging originally to the other.

The source of the Kenelm legend is as obscure as that of Ethelbert. No Kenelm is mentioned in the *Saxon Chronicle*; but a Cynehelm, *princeps*² or *dux*,³ and once a Cenelm called *filius regis*,⁴ signs various charters during the reign of Coenuulf between the years 798 and 811; and one of these charters (the last) is signed also by Quoendryð, *filia regis*.⁵ Legend is obviously wrong in representing Kenelm as only seven years old at the time of his death, if this occurred in 819;⁶ he must have been at least twenty-one, and probably more; even if he died before Coenuulf, he must have been at least thirteen.⁷

That a legend of St. Kenelm existed as early as the year 1000 is shown by the *Hyde Register*, "þonne resteð sancte Kenelm cynebearn on pinclescumbe;"⁸ that Kenelm and Quoendryð were indeed the children of Coenuulf seems clear from the fact that both charters in which they are so called are preserved in very early copies, one almost contemporary and one indorsed in the tenth or early eleventh century; that the two legends were confused is shown not only in *NLA*, but also in the *Peterborough Chronicle*, in which occurs the statement:

Kenwulfus rex Merciorum obiit, relicto filio septenni Kenelmo, qui fraude uxoris et nutricii sui in sylva martyrizatur.⁹

¹ Such as the column of light from the tomb (*NLA*, I, 417, ll. 17-23, 41-43, and 418, l. 1; and II, 111, ll. 13, 14) which is found in other saints' legends; and the fountain of healing water, which is also common, but is told in *NLA* only of Kenelm (II, 112, ll. 1-3). *Br* also relates this of Kenelm (col. 778, ll. 15-17), but *V2* tells it of Ethelbert (24, ll. 40-55) and uses in this connection the incident of the head rolling on the ground and giving sight to a blind man, which is similar to a detail in the Ethelbert of *NLA* (I, 417, ll. 11-17 and 38, 39).

² *BIRCH*, I, Nos. 308, 335.

³ *Ibid.*, Nos. 313, 314, 316 (Kynhelm), 321 (Cynhelm), 322, 326 (Cynhelm), 338 (Cynhelmus), 339.

⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 296.

⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 339.

⁶ Cf. *Sax. Chron.*, and FLORENCE OF WORCESTER, I, 65, *an.* 819.

⁷ The charters cover thirteen years, from 798 to 811. King Alfred's name is attached to charters of 853, 854, when he was only four or five years old (*ibid.*, II, Nos. 467, 468, 469).

⁸ *Liber Vitae*, 92. The alliterative word *cynebearn*, which also appears in the English couplet quoted first in *J* (fol. 14b) and in *CM* (I, 373), suggests that the legend may have existed at that time in poetic form.

⁹ *Chronicon Angliae Petriburgense* (ed. GILES, London, 1845), p. 12, *an.* 819. The words that I italicize must mean that Cynethryth or Quendrida was regarded by this chronicler as Coenuulf's wife.

5. The most obvious source of confusion at once suggests itself in the resemblance between the two names Cynethryth and Quoenthryth, both of which seem to have been Latinized as Quendrida; and, indeed, a clear case of this seems to be deducible from a suspected charter, quoted by William of Malmesbury,¹ in which in the year 798 an abbess Kinedrip, with the consent of her *carissimis cognatis* Ethelburh² and Celfed (*Ælfled*?), grants certain lands to Kenelm, who is here called king. The association of these three names seems to indicate that the abbess alluded to is thought of as Offa's queen, who is thus also associated with St. Kenelm.

The next question that arises is whether, in the absence of all evidence as to the date and substratum of truth in each legend, it is possible to decide whether the one is a mere reflection—a duplication—of the other; or whether it may be believed that each had an independent origin and that gradually, because of a certain likeness between them, the two were drawn together. It may be somewhat confidently asserted that the Kenelm story shows too many peculiar features to be a mere reflection;³ but also, on the other hand, that if any reason could be found for attaching the blame of Ethelbert's death to Cynethryth, in a measure or altogether, the Kenelm legend, whatever its source, would have furthered the process, and perhaps in turn have been affected by the Ethelbert legend.

But in the attachment of the blame lies the whole difficulty; and as neither the Ethelbert nor the Kenelm legend gives any clue as to the way in which the queen became implicated, we must turn to the first part of the text, the account of the exiled princess Drida, for the explanation.

¹ *Adami de Domerham Hist. de Reb. Gest. Glaston.* (ed. HEARNE, Oxford, 1727), I, 65, 67. This document is generally regarded as spurious, although the writer claims that he translated it as well as he could from an English source.

² An Ethelburge appears in the questionable Chertsey charter (BIRCH, I, No. 251) among Offa's daughters; but the Æthelburg, abbess of Fladbury, who is named in the charters, seems to have been the daughter of an Alfred, and kinswoman of Alfred of the Huiccii (*ibid.*, Nos. 238, 217).

³ The most striking of these is the incident of the white bird that carried the scroll with the English inscription announcing Kenelm's death to the pope, and dropped it upon the altar. This was known at the beginning of the twelfth century, being quoted by FLORENCE OF WORCESTER (*Eng. Hist. Soc.*, 1848, I, 65. *an.* 819), and by WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY (*De Gest. Reg. Ang.* [Rolls Series, 1887], I, 95, 262, 263).

B. *The sources of the tale of the exiled princess.*

1. Suchier¹ first pointed out in detail a resemblance noted by Kemble² between the narratives of Drida and of Thrytho in *Beowulf*, 1931–57. Before discussing the point, it will be convenient perhaps to set the Latin and English side by side:

Beowulf, 1931–57.

V 2, 12, ll. 32–57; 13, ll. 1–6.

Mōd Ðrȳðo wæg,
fremu folces cwēn,
fīren ondrysne; nā-
nig þæt dorste dēor
genēþan swāesra ge-
siða, nefne sīn frēa,
þæt hire an dāges
ēagum starede; ac
him wæl-bende weo-
tode tealde hand-
gewriþene; hræpe
seoþðan wæs æfter
mund-gripe mēce
geþinged, þæt hit
scēaden-mæl scȳran
mōste, cwealm-bealu
cȳðan. Ne bið swylc
cwēnlic þēaw idese
to efnanne, þēah ðe
hīo ænlicu sȳ, þætte
freoðu-webbe fēores
onsæce æfter lige-
torne lēofne mannan.
Hūru þæt onhōhs-
nod[e] Hemminges
mæg. Ealo-drin-
cende oðer sæðan,
þæt hīo lēod-bealewa
læsgefremede, inwit-
niða, syððan ærest
wearð gyfen gold-
hroden geongum
cempa, æðelum

Diebus itaque sub eisdem regnante in Francia
Karolo Rege magno ac uictoriosissimo, quedam
puella facie uenusta, sed mente nimis inhonesta,
ipsi regi consanguinea, pro quodam quod patra-
uerat crimine flagiciosissimo, addicta est iudicia-
liter morti ignominiose, uerum ob regie dignitatis
reuerentiam, igni uel ferro tradenda non iudicatur,
sed in nauicula armamentis carente apposit[a],³
uictu tenui, uentis et mari, eorumque ambiguis
casibus exponitur condempnata. Que diu uariis⁴
procellis exagitata, tandem fortuna trahente,
litori Britonum est appulsa, et cum in terra sub-
iecta potestati Regis Offe memorata cimba appli-
cuisset, conspectui regis protinus presentatur.
Interrogata autem quenam esset, respondens
patria lingua affirmauit, se Karolo Regi Fran-
corum fuisse consanguinitate propinquam, Drid-
amque nominatam, sed per tirannidem quorun-
dam ignobilium quorum nuptias ne degeneraret,
spreuit, tali fuisse discrimini adiudicatam, abor-
tisque lacrimis addidit dicens, "Deus autem qui
innocentes a laqueis insidiantium liberat, me
captiuam ad alas tue proteccionis, O Regum
serenissime, feliciter transmisit, ut meum infor-
tunium in auspiciis fortunatum transmutetur et
beatior in exilio quam in natali patria, ab omni
predicer posteritate." Rex autem uerborum su-
orum ornatum et eloquentiam, et corporis puel-
laris cultum, et elegantiam [pendens],⁵ motus
pietate, precepit ut ad comitissam Marcelline
matrem suam tucius duceretur alenda, ac mitius
sub tam honeste matrone custodia, donec regium
mandatum audiret confouenda. Puella igitur

¹ P. U. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 500 ff.

³ MS *apposito*.

² *Beowulf*, 1837, pp. xxxv, xxxvi.

⁴ Written twice.

⁵ *Pendens* inserted by Wats; MS Claud. E IV has *considerans* in the margin (fol. 89a).

Beowulf

diofe syððan hīo Of-
fan flet ofer fealone
flōd be fæder lāre
siðe gesōhte; ðær
hīo syððan well in
gum-stōle, gōde
mære, lif-gesceafta
lifigende brēac, hīold
hēah-lufan wið hæ-
lepa brego, ealles
mon-cynnes, mīne
gefræge, pone sē-
lestan bi sām twēo-
num, eormen-cynnes.

V 2

infra paucos dies, macie *et* palloreper alimenta
depulsis, rediit decor pristinus, ita ut mulierum
pulcherima censeretur. *Sed* cito in uerba iactan-
tie *et* elacionis, secundum patrie sue consue-
tudinem, prorumpens, domine sue comitisse *que*
materno affectu eam dulciter educauerat, molesta
nimis fuit, ipsam procaciter contempnendo. *Sed*
comitissa, pro amore filii sui regis, omnia pacien-
ter tolerauit; licet *et* ipsa dicta puella, inter
comitem *et* comitissam uerba discordie seminas-
set. Una igitur dierum cum rex ipsam causa
uisitacionis adiens, uerbis consolatoriis alloque-
retur, incidit in retia amoris illius; erat enim iam
species illius concupiscibilis. Clamdestino igitur
ac repentino matrimonio ipsam sibi *inconsultis*
patre *et* matre, necnon *et* magnatibus suis uni-
uersis, copulauit. Unde uterque parentum, dolore
ac tedio in etate senili contabescens dies uite
abreuiando, sue mortis horam lugubriter antici-
parunt; sciebant enim ipsam mulierculam fuisse,
et regalibus amplexibus prorsus indignam; per-
pendebantque iam iam (ueraciss) ueracissime, non
sine causa exilio lacrimabili, ipsam ut *predictum*
est, fuisse conde[m]pnatam.

With due allowance for the difference in scale, the general resemblance of the stories, together with the identity of the name, is sufficient to indicate a relation between them. There is occasionally even a certain likeness of phrase. But the differences and ambiguities are important.

Of the two versions in *Beowulf*, taking as nearest to *V 2*, ll. 1931-44 together with ll. 1947-51 (syððan . . . gesōhte) as a summary of the episode immediately preceding Thrytho's marriage to Offa, we find the following difficulties in the way of accepting the identity of the tales:

a) *Beowulf*, ll. 1931-47, seems to imply that the heroine had a habit of killing all the men who looked at her, both before and after her marriage, until Hemming's kinsman stopped the practice. In *V 2*, Drida is accused of only two crimes, the one for which she was banished, which is not described, and the murder

of St. Ethelbert, for which no motive of "pretended insult," as in *Beowulf*, is suggested.

b) L. 1948 seems to describe the formal bestowal of a bride rather than a clandestine marriage with an outcast who had been banished for crime. Compare the description of a bride in ll. 2024, 2025:

Sio gehāten [wæs],
geong, gold-hroden, gladam suna Frōdan.

c) The phrase, "æðelum dīore" (l. 1949), becomes ironic when taken in connection with *V* 2, wherein the compiler obviously sneers at the heroine for her pride of race.¹

d) The expression, "be fæder lāre" (l. 1950), is as easily interpreted to mean that she went at her father's bidding (perhaps with him) as that he sent her into exile.

e) "Offan flet . . . sīðe gesōhte" (ll. 1949, 1951) seems rather to imply a definite destination than a chance ending to a wandering in a rudderless boat.

Of these objections the most serious are the first and second. The third can be answered by the simple statement that, whatever her crime, and character in the eyes of the compiler, Drida was still of the lineage of Charlemagne, who was indeed probably her father,² though this is not stated in *V* 2; while the fourth and fifth are too ambiguous to tell much either way.

A partial answer may be made to the second point, in that in several versions of the tale in which a daughter is turned adrift by her father, or flees to escape a hated marriage, she wears a beautiful robe, which is indeed her wedding dress.³

The prime objection may be met in part by the fact that in *V* 2 Drida is described as full of mischief and malice,⁴ and that the compiler has left the character of her early crime (or crimes) vague, except in that he declares it punishable by death; and,

¹ Cf. especially *V*, 23, l. 27, "superbiens eo quod ex stirpe Karoli originem duxerat."

² See p. 28, below.

³ It is especially prominent in *Emaré* (ed. RITSON, *Ancient English Metrical Romance*s (London, 1802), II, 204, ll. 80-180, 242, 243, 270; in some cases the girl takes much treasure with her (cf. SUCHIER, *La Manékine* [Paris, 1884], pp. xxix ff.).

⁴ See the Latin on p. 19, above, in regard to Offa's parents; compare also "inexorabili odio uiros memoratos (Humbertus and Unwona) persequabatur, tendens eis muscipulas muliebres" (*V*, 23, ll. 27, 28 and 42-48.) Cf. *Br.*, col. 750, l. 48, "muliebri plena tam hastutia quam malicia."

again, that the motive of "pretended insult" is at least suggested in another version of the Ethelbert story mentioned by Bromton:

Et sicut quaedam aliae referuntur historiae in juvenem regem *Ethelbertum* forma insignem petulantes oculos incesta regina uxor *Offae* coniecit, quem quia nullatenus ad consensum inclinare valuit, tanquam uxor *Puteifar* secunda, *Josephum* alterum in *Ethelberto* reperiens, quasi vipera aculeis exagitata totum virus evomit in vindictam; sicque mater filiae invidens, & propter repulsam tanti viri quasi confusa plurimum erubescens, vitam viri sancti morte crudeli muliebri malicia statuit terminare.¹

In this state of affairs it is possible to believe that the queen, in urging the murder upon Offa, reversed the situation and made pretense of insult, as did the stepmother in the *Dolopathos* of Johannes de Alta Silva and the stories based upon it.²

2. At this point it is necessary to examine more particularly the differences between the two accounts given in *Beowulf*, with the hope of getting more light upon the peculiarities of the Drida version itself.

Scholars seem to be generally agreed that ll. 1944–57 represent the true and primitive form of the story;³ also, that the Thrytho whose nature was so altered by marriage was none other than a valkyrie, whose attitude toward her suitors was similar to that of Hermuthruda⁴ and Brunhild,⁵ whose practice it was to kill suitors.

According to this view, the original story may be summed up as follows: the fierce queen, who at her father's command crossed the sea and was given gold-adorned to the young hero Offa, after her marriage became so changed in nature that she brought about fewer deaths among the people, but, on the con-

¹ Br., col. 751, l. 67—col. 752, l. 9. Cf. V, 23, l. 48: "uirus sue malicie truculenter, euomit."

² Ed. OESTERLEY (Strassburg, 1873), 33, ll. 28 ff.

³ P. U. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 508, 509; *Quell. u. Forsch.*, LXII, 229, 230.

⁴ SAXO describes the demeanor of Hermuthruda as follows: "Sciebat namque, eam non modo pudicia celibem, sed etiam insolencia atrocem, proprios semper exosam procos, amatoribus suis ultimum irrogasse supplicium, adeo ut ne unus quidem e multis exstaret, qui procacionis eius penas capite non lisset" (ed. HOLD., 101, l. 39—102, l. 3). Cf. also 102, 28, 27, and 106, 6–19, and OLRIK, "Kild. til Sakses Oldhistorie," *Aarbøger f. Nord. Oldk. og Hist.*, II, Række, 7. Bind, 1–2. Hefte, 93, 94.)

⁵ In the *Nibelungenlied*, see especially stanzas 326, 327. SUCHIER (P. U. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 509, n. 2) gives several references for the practice in other countries.

trary, was of good report and held in as great honor as her husband himself.

The place of this Thrytho in Germanic mythology has been in a measure ascertained. She seems to be the same as the Norse *Drüðr* who with *Hildir* is mentioned as a valkyrie in a poem formerly considered a part of the *Grimnismál*.¹ As Thor's daughter she personified strength pure and simple; as the daughter of Thor and *Sif*, perhaps, according to Mogk, "die treibende Kraft des Erdbodens, die der Donnergott durch seine Umarmung mit der neuerwachten Erde ins Leben gerufen hat."²

The only bearing which this mythological interpretation seems to have upon the *Beowulf* passage is in its suggestion that the original meaning of the latter was perhaps that Offa was strong enough to tame the very goddess of strength herself.³ And if we may reason from the analogy of Brunhild (in the *Nibelungenlied*) and of Hermuthruda (although the latter indeed foregoes her practice in the case of Amleth), we may conclude that if Offa had not proved the stronger, he himself would have been slain. But this interpretation only removes the primitive Thrytho version farther from the tale of Drida, with which, at best, its chief point of contact is l. 1950.

The later version of the story may be summed up as follows: the fierce queen, who at her father's command crossed the sea and was given gold-adorned to the young hero Offa, continued after her marriage her practice of killing all the "dear companions," except her husband, who so much as ventured to look at her, until Offa stopped her career of crime.

Whether or not this later version be considered a part of the original poem, introduced by way of contrast to Hygd, or as in itself an interpolation, it seems to me highly probable that we owe the introduction of the primitive version to the fact that the second hand in the MS begins with *mōste* (l. 1939). The new scribe wrote four lines more of the story, then an abrupt conclu-

¹ *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, I, 75, l. 19.

² MOGK in PAUL'S *Grundriss* (Strassburg, 1900), III, 358, 359, 361. See also MEYER, *German. Myth.*, 177, 203.

³ The only story that seems to be told of *Drüðr*, her abduction by the dwarf *Alf* (*Alvis*), during Thor's absence, and the punishment of the dwarf (MOGK, 359), can have nothing to do with Offa.

sion that gives no details as to the outcome (l. 1944), following this by an outline of another version that he knew—one that was told among “ale-drinkers”¹—in which he adds to a summary of Thrytho’s career, a brief summary of her husband’s.²

This interpretation of the passage does not ascribe to the second copyist any great degree of invention, in supposing that he strung together a few descriptive phrases, which might easily in many instances have been taken directly from the “ale-drinkers’” version.³ The lines from 1945 to 1962 seem to me almost as devoid of poetic spirit as they could well be, and are obviously of the nature of a summary, with obscure allusions that would need no explanation to an audience familiar with the story.

For the difference between these two versions, which existed as early as the eighth century and perhaps much earlier, I cannot offer an explanation;⁴ but I believe that it is possible to show that a later interpretation — i. e., misinterpretation — of the second version (ll. 1931–34 and perhaps 1947–51, as common to both accounts) in connection with a certain historical occurrence might explain the transference of the tale from O1 and its attachment to Cynethryth, the wife of O2.

3. There is good reason for holding that the history of Offa’s daughter Eadburg, which is probably in the main true,⁵ furnishes the clue to the attribution of the crime of murder to the innocent Cynethryth. This idea is suggested somewhat vaguely by Müllenhoff,⁶ and perhaps implied by Earle.⁷ At least, the general resemblance in the character of the tales is evident. According to Asser, Offa’s daughter, the haughty Eadburg, pursued a career

¹ Does this word perhaps imply that the following account was the more popular and widespread of the two?

² See Part I, pp. 27 ff. above.

³ Note, too, the suggestion of hearsay in the conventional “mine gefræge” (l. 1955).

⁴ TEN BRINK suggests (*Quell. u. Forsch.*, LXII, 229–31, with note) that this may have been due to the resemblance between the names *Thrytho* and *Osthryth* (*Ostryð*, *Sax. Chron.*, MS Laud, an. 697), the latter being that of a Mercian queen who was killed by her own people in 697.

⁵ It is related by Asser, writing probably within fifty years of the woman’s death (STEVENSON, pp. lxxi–lxxiv), on the authority of King Alfred himself, who knew people who had seen Eadburg in her old age. Mr. Stevenson finds no reason for discrediting the tale (*ibid.*, 205, n. 2, 206).

⁶ *Beowulf*, 76.

⁷ He mentions in connection with Cynethryth the crimes related of Eadburg and adds: “This story seems to pursue the family of Offa” (*The Deeds of Beowulf* [Oxford, 1892], 174).

of crime until upon the death of her husband, who drank the poison she intended for another, she was forced to flee and escaped in a boat with much treasure. Arriving at the court of Charlemagne, she was there offered marriage, but continued her evil life and came to a miserable end as a beggar.

While in its main outline the story as I have told it shows a certain parallel to the early career of Drida, it contains so many differences of detail as, at first glance, to obscure the real likeness. These differences I shall deal with in another connection; and proceed to the reasons for holding that this true history, if it did not give rise to a fiction about St. Ethelbert, at least supplied false circumstances to take the place of the true ones long forgotten.

The story of Eadburg arose between 802 and 893 (Beorhtric died in 802; according to the *Sax. Chron.* in 800). The legend of St. Ethelbert arose between 794 and 1000; the legend of St. Kenelm, between 819 (821) and 1000. The story of Thrytho was in circulation in the eighth century, perhaps much earlier, and was copied in its present double form about the year 900.

From this comparison it is clear that the Eadburg story, with its limit *a quo* between the supposed dates of the martyrdom of the two saints, is known to have existed more than a hundred years before the earliest allusion to legends of these saints. Hence, in regard to date, it is easily possible for the Eadburg story to have been a link in the development of the Thrytho tale into the Drida story, if other evidence of this appear.

Considering that the Thrytho story was certainly known at the time when the Eadburg story came into existence, I find the parallelism between Asser's¹ account and *Beowulf*, 1931-44, significant:

a) "Mōd Ðrȳðo wæg, fremu folces cwēn" is very similar to the description of Eadburg: "more paterno tyrannice vivere coepit."

b) Thrytho committed various murders as did Eadburg.²

c) Thrytho attacked the "swāesra gesiða;" Eadburg began "omnem hominem execrari quem Beorhtric diligeret;" i. e., both women were especially hostile to their husbands' friends.

¹ Cap. 14, 15 (ed. STEVENSON, pp. 12-14).

² ". . . et omnes, quos posset, ad regem accusare, et ita aut vita aut potestate per insidias privare. Et si a rege illud impetrare non posset, veneno eos necabat."

d) In both cases the career of wickedness appears to have been cut short abruptly.

In brief, we have in each case the criminal career of a tyrannical princess, with special reference to her murders of her husband's friends, connected with exile or, at least, a journey across the sea.

Now, if we can imagine both these episodes living on side by side, with less and less definiteness as to names and dates, there might have come a time when people, hearing that Thrytho was the wife of an Offa, and that she wickedly murdered any "dear man" who looked upon her, and knowing from the *Saxon Chronicle*, if from no other source, that Offa had beheaded Ethelbert, might have begun to wonder whether Thrytho were not responsible for this crime. Further, having in mind the tale of Eadburg, Offa's daughter, who undoubtedly murdered her husband's dear companions, among them one that he loved especially, they might easily have formed the conclusion that the special *dilectissimus* was Ethelbert and that he was really murdered by Queen Thrytho. If this process took place during the tenth century, the legend of St. Ethelbert (as well as that of St. Kenelm) might well have been developed by the year 1000.

But this hypothesis which suggests an explanation for the parallelisms is not unsupported by facts:

a) Simeon of Durham¹ in repeating Asser's story alters "omnem hominem execrari, quem Beorhtric diligeret, et omnia odibilia Deo et hominibus facere et omnes quos posset, ad regem accusare, et ita aut vita aut potestate per insidias privare. Et si a rege illud impetrare non posset, veneno eos necabat," to "omnes religiosos viros ad regem semper accusare non cessavit, et ita maledicta virum suum constrinxit blanditiis." This change seems to show that the religious element had intruded into the story at least as early as the first half of the twelfth century.

b) "Ad regem accusare" is contrary to the tenor of *Beowulf* (especially l. 1944); but agrees with the demeanor of the king in the legends of St. Ethelbert; i. e., the history of Eadburg serves to explain the chief point of departure between the accounts of

¹ *Opera* (Rolls Series, 1885), II, 66.

Thrytho and of Drida. Thrytho killed her husband's friends; Eadburg accused them to the king, and when she could not procure their death in this way, slew them with poison; Drida accused St. Ethelbert to the king and so caused his martyrdom, or (in *V* 2), failing to persuade the king, killed him herself.

c) Eadburg fled into exile "cum innumerabilibus thesauris."¹ Drida was "mulier auara" and must have carried much treasure with her when she was exiled, in that she was killed by robbers for her wealth ("auro et argento quo multum (h)abundabat spoliata").² Thrytho too was *gold-hroden*, though probably in quite a different sense.³

That the likeness between the two stories was recognized in later times appears in several ways. Richard of Cirencester (fourteenth century) changes Asser's "more paterno tyrannice vivere" of Eadburg, to "materna tyrannide incitata."⁴ John Hardyng (fifteenth century) in his poetical *Chronicle* attributes to "Edburge (Eburge) of Mers" the murder of Albert (=St. Ethelbert) as well as of Beorhtric.⁵ Again, Higden (fourteenth century) followed by both his translators, confuses the tale of the martyrdom with the murder of Æthelred of Northumbria who married Offa's other daughter Ælfled⁶ (in *V* 2,⁷ she is said to have been the bride of Ethelbert). The chief significance of this confusion lies perhaps in its showing the ease with which family relationships were altered in the attachment and localization of a legend.⁸

This relation between the three tales suffices to show that Thrytho's killing the *swāesra gesīða* through *lige-torne*, might have developed into the tale of Drida's crimes, interpreted to

¹ ASSER, cap. 15, l. 3 (STEVENSON, p. 13).

² *V*, 25, ll. 17-19.

³ See p. 20, above.

⁴ *Speculum Historiale de Gest. Reg. Angl.* (Rolls Series, 1863), I, 260.

⁵ Ed. ELLIS (London, 1812), 189-91.

⁶ *Polychronicon* (Rolls Series, 1876), VI, 268, 270, 272, 278, 280.

⁷ *V*, 23, l. 35.

⁸ The confusion in later times is endless. Higden (followed by Hardyng in several MSS) substitutes *Ethelburg* for *Eadburg*. Whether this blunder arose from the mistake in connection with the abbess of Fladbury (see p. 17, n. 2, above), or from the legend of St. Ethelburga is uncertain. The latter in *NLA* (I, 419 ff.) is called the daughter of an Offa, and further was so persecuted by her father for her steadfast refusal to marry that she had to flee (cf. the marriage story in *V* 1; only, in the case of St. Ethelburga, it is not clear whom she was to marry). But in *NLA*, the parentage of another St. Ethelburga is confused with that of St. Edburga (*NLA*, I, 308). And so the process continues until the extrication of the original elements seems hopeless.

refer especially to the murder of St. Ethelbert¹ (this in *Br*, clearly, through *lige-torne*), attached to the historic Cynethryth, through a partial identity of name, and by a confusion of a similar killing of *swāesra gesīða* told of Eadburg, Offa's daughter,² the development being doubtless hastened by the parallel legend of Quendrida and St. Kenelm.

If, then, the Thrytho tale had by the twelfth century become so modified by the Eadburg story as to be the chief source of the Ethelbert legends, the fact that *V2* departs from the versions of *Br* (and Gerald de Barri's *Vita*) and *NLA*, not only in many details, but in alone containing the heroine's name³ and the account of her early life, can scarcely be explained by further use of the same source, but would seem to arise from an attempt either to combine two or more versions differing somewhat, or to borrow features from another tale. Does the use of the name Petronilla or the introduction of Charlemagne into the story serve to explain these differences?

4. Undoubtedly the Petronilla feature is the most obscure of any. Suchier attributes this part of the tale to pure invention,⁴ while Müllenhoff⁵ dismisses it with the unexplained remark that Petronilla is the heroine's true name. From what has been shown of the compiler's methods of work, it is difficult to believe that

¹ Whatever ll. 1936-40 mean, they imply first bonds and then death by the sword. So far I think most of the translators agree. In regard to l. 1939 they differ (see note on the line in Wyatt's edition [Cambridge, 1898], p. 82; also especially BUGGE in *Zeitschr. f. Deutsch. Phil.* [Halle, 1873], IV, 207, 208, and the glossary in the HEYNE-SOCIN *Beowulf* [Paderborn and Münster, 1888]; but in all the interpretations suggested the fundamental fact that a sword was the means of death remains clear. If Wyatt's text be adopted, another interpretation (though very far-fetched) of ll. 1936-40, in the light of *V2*, might be that after the curtains and bed-clothes had smothered the victim, the sword which cut off his head was destined to reveal the murder (i. e., by miracle). But I do not think that "wæl-bende. . . hand-gewirpene" can mean anything but ropes or fetters. The most natural interpretation of the passage seems to me that after the victim was bound and slain, the sword revealed the murder by the blood-stains upon it.

² I cannot but think that there is some relation between the compiler's careful attachment of the title *queen* to Drida, as if it were an extraordinary thing that she should be so called, and the fact that Eadburg's story was told as the explanation of how in Wessex the title came to be lost. But the meaning of this relation I cannot venture to interpret.

³ In connection with the fact that in *Br* and *NLA* the queen is nameless, it may be observed that in regard to the daughter's name, which in *V2* is *Ælfleda*, *Br* (col. 752, ll. 29-31) reads: "Virgo igitu *Althrida*, quae & secundum quosdam dicitur *Alfrida*," (in *NLA*, I, 414, l. 43, 416, l. 42, *Alfrida*); *Alfrida* may be a corruption of *Ælfled(a)*; but *Althrida* suggests *Drida*.

⁴ P. v. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 508.

⁵ *Beowulf*, 78.

he would have invented and introduced, without any authority whatever, this element which serves no obvious purpose but that of more deeply confusing his text. And again, I find no indication that Petronilla was the heroine's true name. The word occurs but once, in the passage, "que se Petronillam nominavit,"¹ which taken alone might imply that the exile changed her name, just as she gave a false, and to herself creditable, explanation of her banishment. This inference is not in accord with the passage in which her name is said to have become changed from Drida to Quendrida because of the unexpectedness with which she was made queen,² but if a sufficient source could be found for the connection of a Petronilla with Offa, a discrepancy such as this in the combination of the two legends is exactly what we should expect of the compiler.

At the outset two facts are clear about the Petronilla element: that it has nothing to do with the legend of St. Petronilla,³ and that the name, of classical origin, seems to have been used historically among the French more than among the English⁴—a point which suggests the possible source of the heroine's connection with Charlemagne.

It is stated on good authority⁵ that there was at one time a question of a marriage alliance between the children of Offa and Charlemagne. The author of the *Gesta Abbatum Fontanellensium*, who must have been born before Charlemagne died, asserts that Charlemagne asked the hand of Offa's daughter (probably

¹ V, 13, l. 15.

² V, 23, ll. 25, 26.

³ The only account of this saint that I have found, in MSS Nero E I and Harl. 624, is a brief narrative in Latin, telling how her father, St. Peter, cured her of paralysis, and how in answer to her prayers she was allowed to die as an alternative to marrying the *comes Flaccus* (Nero E I, fols. 210, 211). Cf. HERZFELD, *O. E. Martyrology* (E. E. T. S., 1900), 88. Cf. also MS Stowe, 949, fols. 154, 155, for a fourteenth-century version.

⁴ See indexes to DUCHESNE, *Hist. Francor. Script.* (Paris, 1636, etc.); BOUQUET, *Historiens de la France* (Paris, 1738, etc.); and PERTZ, *Monum. Germ.* (Hanover, 1826, etc.). The name *Marcellina*, *Marcella* (V, 10, l. 26; 11, ll. 49, 50; 12, l. 48; 13, l. 9), given to Offa's mother, was almost certainly introduced from some foreign source. Its resemblance in sound to *Matrosilie*, the mother-in-law in *La Naiss. du Chev. au Cygne* (ed. TODD, *Publ. of the Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, IV, 1889, l. 713), is probably accidental.

⁵ "Novissime vero propter filiam eiusdem regis, quam in coniugium expostulabat Carolus iunior; sed illo hoc non acquiescente, nisi Berta, filia Magni Karoli, eius filio nuptui traderetur, aliquantulum potentissimus rex commotus, praecepit, ut nemo de Britannia insula ac gente Anglorum mercimonii causa litus oceani maris attingeret in Gallia. Sed ne hoc fieret, ammonitione ac supplicatione venerandi praedicti patris Gervoldi inhibitum est" (*Gest. Abb. Font.*, ed. LÖWENFELD, 46, 47).

Eadburg) for his son, and that Offa agreed if Charlemagne would grant the hand of his daughter Bertha to Ecgferth, whereupon Charlemagne was so enraged that war between the kings was with difficulty averted.

Whether or not this story is true—and it bears out Einhard's¹ curious testimony that Charlemagne could not bear the thought that any of his daughters should marry—it suggests at least that in the eighth and ninth centuries the names of Offa and Charlemagne were connected in a question of marriage.

The relationship of Drida-Petronilla with Charlemagne might perhaps have arisen from the allusion to Eadburg in the Fontenelle account; but, although Eadburg agrees with Drida in character and in her flight across the sea,² the relationship with Charlemagne belongs rather to Bertha.

The next point must be to determine whether any story told of a Bertha resembles the Drida tale sufficiently to account for its connection with Charlemagne.

The name *Bertha* is peculiarly associated with the emperor: his mother was *Bertha*, *Berthrada*, or *Bertrada*; his granddaughter was *Berthaid*, and his favorite daughter, *Bertha*.³ His sister was the subject of legend (in the Venice *Charlemagne* she is called *Berte*), and his mother was one of the popular literary figures of the Middle Ages. The objection that immediately arises on the ground of difference of relationship is met by the fact that the compiler never once defines Drida's degree of kinship to Charlemagne, using only the expression *consanguinea* and *consanguinitate propinquam*, and possibly alluding to him or his son in the phrase "*alicui transmarino amico suo*."⁴

But in order to show that the Frankish or Romance element in *V2* was really derived through some form of the *Berte* story, it is necessary to trace, if possible, a connection between the names *Berte* and *Petronilla*, and to indicate peculiarities in the text that seem to have been taken from the tale of *Berte*.

¹ *Vita Karoli Imperatoris*, cap. xix.

² From England to France, however.

³ See MOMBERT, *History of Charles the Great* (London, 1888), Index. According to some accounts, his first wife was *Berterad* (*ibid.*, 77, n. 2).

⁴ Cf. *V*, 12, l. 33, ll. 40, 41; 23, ll. 27, 45.

There is, of course, no real relation between *Petronilla* (a diminutive formed from the Greek *Peter*) and the Germanic word *Bertha*, which comes from a root meaning *bright*.¹ But the name *Bertha* in the Middle Ages existed in a variety of forms and combinations, some of which depart very far from the original word. For example, it is *Berte* (*Bierte*) and *Bertain* (*Biertain*)² in French. It is quoted from various German sources in forms as diverse as *Perahta*, *Berhta*, *Berchta*, *Berchte*, *Perchtha*, *Precht*, *Perchtel*, and even in such extensions as *Prechtölterli*, *Brechtölterin*, and *Prechtölterin*.⁴ It occurs in Latin records of Merovingian and Carolingian times in the variants and combinations: *Berta*, *Berthaïd(is)*, *Bertrada*, *Berchtrudis* (= *Berthe-trude*), *Bertilia*, *Bertildis*, *Bertranda*, *Bertana*, *Bertilla*, *Perhta*, *Perhterat*, *Perhtrada*, and others.⁴ Undoubtedly other variants existed;⁵ and among them may have been some form that could have become confused with *Petronilla*,⁶ which was a common name in the twelfth century.⁷

In other words, if there is sufficient evidence of influence upon *V* from any form of the legend of *Berte*, the name *Petronilla* is not a serious objection in the way of admitting it.

Aside from its function in relating the tale to Charlemagne, the influence of the *Berte* legend in *V* appears in three ways:

1. Allusions in the text to a possible conquest of England by Charlemagne.

¹ GRIMM, *Deutsch. Myth.* (ed. MEYER), 184 and 660, n. 3.

² See PHILIPPE MOUSKES, *Chronique rimée* (ed. DE REIFFENBERG, ll. 2696, 2707, 2715, 2717, 2722, 2736, 2737).

³ GRIMM, *Deutsch. Myth.* (ed. MEYER), 226-34.

⁴ Indexes to DUCHESNE, BOUQUET, PERTZ.

⁵ *Bertanilla* (cf. *Bertana*, *Bertilla*), for example, does not seem impossible, although I have not found it.

⁶ Especially by the compiler. Wishing to identify his *Humbertus*, archbishop of Lichfield, with the historical *Berhtun* (*Byrhtun*), who was bishop of Lichfield some years before (see HADDAN AND STUBBS, III, 435, 446), he does it as follows: "*Humbertus, quem quidam Bertum appellant, syllaba subtracta*" (*V*, 22, ll. 15, 16).

⁷ It is not impossible that an historical allusion may underlie the form *Petronilla*. Obviously the compiler did not love the French (as appears from: "*in uerba iactantie et elacionis secundum patrie sue consuetudinem prorumpens*" (*V*, 12, ll. 51, 52); and clearly Abbot John de Cella had no good reason to love King John, who actually claimed jurisdiction over St. Albans and had to be bought off at a heavy price. This king was notoriously under the influence of his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and she had a sister *Petronilla* (cf. BORQUET, XII, 116C, 410B, 471D, E). Is it impossible that in this picture of a haughty, avaricious, unscrupulous Frenchwoman called *Petronilla* an indirect stab at the queen-mother herself may have been intended?

2. The introduction of the innocent, persecuted woman theme.
3. The original character of Berte as compared with that of Drida.

1. Gaston Paris has pointed out traces of a lost *chanson de geste* treating of the conquest of England by Charlemagne.¹ At least three other allusions to such an event may be given:

a) *J* says: "Porro iste, sicut alia regna, sic et Angliam tempore huius regis Offe sibi subegit."² Such an assertion, in the absence of all historical evidence, could have come only from legend, popular literature. If the author of *J* is also the compiler of *CM 1* and of *V*, the extension of reading shown between *J* and *CM 1* would have led to the correction of the blunder in the latter, while *V*, with its account of the unsuccessful attempts of the queen to bring the kingdom under the rule of her Frankish friend, may represent an attempt to combine history and legend.³

b) The second allusion to the conquest of England is in Walter Map's story of Gado⁴ (= Wada, Wade). In this, Offa is king of "insulam nostram, id est Angliam," the builder of the great dyke; but his connection with Wade suggests also a confusion with O 1. The invading army comes from Rome, headed by an emperor, who is called by a punning name, obviously substituted for his real name for the sake of abusing him.⁵ This tale is either unique in its subject-matter or is related to that branch of the Arthur literature that deals with a war in Brittany against the Romans who were intending an invasion of England, and in that case has nothing to do with Wade or with either Offa; or a fictitious Roman invasion came to be connected with Charlemagne by virtue of his coronation at Rome. The probability that this last view is correct is increased by the suppression of the emperor's true name⁵ and by Map's assertion, "Multa inter

¹ *Hist. Poét. de Charl.* (Paris, 1865), 295. Note especially MOUSKES, *Chronique rimée*, l. 4642, and the English poem, *Rouland and Vernagu* (E. E. T. S., *Eng. Charl. Rom.*, VI, pp. 37 ff.), ll. 7-9, which adds, "& emperour he was of rome," l. 14.

² Fol. 13a; GALE, III, 529.

³ The compiler seems to boast of special knowledge of Charlemagne's campaigns against the Saxons (cf. *V*, 14, 7-9, 15, 16). This may have been derived from historical records; but "que speciales tractatus exigeret" implies an abundance of material that suggests Bodel's *chanson de geste* or its predecessor.

⁴ *De Nug. Cur.*, Distinc. II, cap. xvii.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁶ In form it suggests most nearly the name of Conan (Meriaduc) who, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, was the leader in a fabulous conquest of Brittany. But this identification leads to endless difficulties.

Romanos et Anglos audivimus ad utrorumque lacrimas facta conjugia, quorum hoc unum," which is in perfect keeping with Drida-Petronilla's trouble-making propensities in *V* 2,¹ and might have arisen from the hint in the Fontenelle account.

c) A different legend implying also the conquest of England is preserved in the *Weihenstephan Chronik*. According to this, while Charlemagne was absent in a war, his wife came to the point of marrying the king of England; but, informed by an angel of the event, he returned in time to stop the proceedings, and reduced the English king to submission.²

These hints, when taken in connection with the narrative of the Fontenelle monk, seem to furnish grounds for a legendary marriage between a daughter or other kinswoman of Charlemagne to Offa, by reason of which discord arose between the two countries.

2. Drida's excuse that she was banished through the machinations of a disappointed suitor (or suitors?) is borrowed from some form of the innocent, persecuted woman tale. Whether *quorum nuptias ne degeneraret spreuit*"³ refers to a social or a moral⁴ objection, the phrase, taken in connection with the banishment, is suggestive of a class of tales peculiarly associated with Charlemagne,⁵ as I shall endeavor to show; hence, if Drida-Petronilla made use of it to explain her banishment, she is herself thereby doubly connected with Charlemagne.

3. In the absence of any testimony as to the details and character of legends connecting Charlemagne's daughter Berte with a conquest of England, and on the basis of influence from the legend of Berte aux Grands Pieds, Charlemagne's mother, upon both marriage stories in *V*, we may perhaps look to find in this

¹ Map's allusions to the avarice of the Romans (86, 87) and Drida's avarice may also be compared.

² I have not seen the chronicle itself, and ARETIN gives no further details (*Älteste Sage über die Geburt und Jugend Karls des Grossen* [Munich, 1803], 85, 86).

³ *V*, 12, l. 42.

⁴ More probably the objection was moral, as that interpretation accords with the greater number of these tales (cf. *Emaré*, 251-64). But there may have been a social element in it as well. Cf. Petronilla's pride because of her relationship to Charlemagne (*V*, 23, ll. 26, 27) with the description of Bertha by Helperic (or Angilbert) in "Karolus Magnus et Leo Papa" (*Poetæ Lat. Aev. Carol.* (ed. DÜMMLER, Berlin, 1881), I, 371, ll. 219 ff.). She alone of Charlemagne's daughters is described as the feminine replica of her great father. Suchier assumes that it is social (P. u. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 506).

⁵ See pp. 37, 43 ff., below.

widely known story the reason for the introduction of Charlemagne into the Drida story.

The poem, *Berte aus Grans Piés*, by Adenés le Roi, dating from the thirteenth century, was based upon older popular versions for which the courtly minstrel professed great scorn,¹ claiming that he himself had found the only true account among the records of the Abbey of St. Denis.

How these versions differed from the versions of Adenés, it is impossible to say; but it is clear at least that he has borrowed from them his title, which he neither explains nor uses in any way in the plot of the poem. Fortunately there is no doubt as to the meaning of "aus grans piés." The identification of the *reine pédauques* culptured in the portals of several old French churches, with the legendary Berthe of the Middle Ages, seems to have been pretty generally accepted,² and by this identification Bertha of the Big Feet, the Goose-Footed Queen (*Bertha mit dem fuoze*, *Berte aus grans piés*, *Baerte metten breiden voeten*), is seen to have been a swan-maiden, the mediæval representative of the valkyrie. Thus in German folklore she was regarded as a sort of witch, having one foot (sometimes both feet) large, broad, and unshapely.

"Die wilde Berchta," in Germany at least, was regarded as a being akin to "Frau Holle" (indeed, personifying attributes of the same heathen divinity), whom she resembled in her wild rides through the forest and her sudden raids to work mischief upon mankind.³

Of this being there is no trace in the work of Adenés. His Berte is a beautiful, innocent princess, who is by treachery separated from her husband and exposed to die in the forest; and her story thus resolves itself into a variation on the theme of the innocent, persecuted woman.⁴

¹ ED. SCHELER (Brussels, 1874), ll. 5-16 especially. He says:

"Apprentic jongleur et escrivain mari

Ont l'estoire faussée, onques mais ne vi si" (ll. 13, 14).

Cf. also ll. 897-908.

² BULLET in his *Dissertations sur la Mythologie Française*, 1771, pp. 33-63 (published again by LEBER, *Coll. des meilleurs dissert.* [Paris, 1830], 140-61) identifies her with Bertha, the queen of Robert II (died 1031); but see, also, a note by DE REIFFENBERG in the *Chronique rimée* of Mouskes, p. 96, l. 2338; GRIMM (ed. MEYER), *Nachtrag*, 90, 91; and MEYER, 275, 276.

³ GRIMM (ed. MEYER), 226-34; MOGK, 280, 281.

⁴ Cf. PAULIN PARIS, *MSS Français* (Paris, 1845), VI, 42.

In mediæval popular lore, however, there was also a being, called sometimes "die stampfende Trud," who in her character and actions shows a strong resemblance to "die wilde Berchta." The adjective "stampfende" suggests that she, like Broad-Footed Bertha, may have been originally a swan-maiden (a valkyrie). Her derivation from the Old Norse *þrūðr* (O.E. *prȳðo*), however, does not seem to be proved;¹ nor is there any evidence to show that she was known in England,² except in the persistence of the name *Thrytho* in women's names, which is parallel to the persistence of *trud* in Germany.

However, this much seems clear: if Bertha and Trude (*Drute*, *Drude*, *Trute*)³ were known in mediæval folklore at the same time and represented with similar characters, and if a tale of the valkyrie Thrytho as the wife of O 1 was known in England (later, by reason of a partial identity of name and the similarity between the tale and the wicked career of Eadburg, transferred to O 2), and the tale of a valkyrie Bertha was known in France and attached to the name of Charlemagne, and if there was an historical account of a question of marriage between Offa's son (readily supplanted in legend by Offa himself)⁴ and a Bertha, who was the daughter of Charlemagne, we have, barring the corruption of name, all the elements required to explain the confusion in this part of *V* 2.⁵

¹ Mogk (268) objects to Grimm's derivation of the word from Old High German *irūt* = *dilectus*, on the ground of a difference of quantity, but suggests a possible affinity to the Swedish (dialect of Gothland) *druda* = *liedertliches Frauenzimmer*. SUCHIER (P. U. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 509 n.) had previously mentioned, although with much doubt, a possible relationship to the Celtic *druth* (*meretrix*). Mogk objects also to the identification of the *Trude* with the valkyrie on the ground that the former represents merely a personification of the oppression of nightmare. But, in any case, beings of very different origins become more or less assimilated in popular lore.

² Nightmare seems to be personified as *Alp* in southern and central Germany, *Trude* in central Germany, *Schrat* in southern and central Germany, and *Wälriderske* (which suggests the connection with valkyrie) in Friesland and Oldenburg, all of which seem to be much the same thing (MEYER, 118; MOGK, 268, 269).

³ MEYER, *Germ. Myths*, loc. cit.

⁴ In the story of Eadburg, Charlemagne offers her the choice of himself or his son Charlo-man (ASSER, cap. xv).

⁵ Both names are combined in that of the legendary *Berchtrudis* (*Berthetrude*), queen of Chlotarius II. (cf. *Lotaires in La Naiss. du Chev. au Cygne*), mother of the legendary Dagobert (cf. the *Chroniques de St. Denis*, in BOUQUET, III, 272 D, E, 273 A, B, 275 D, and 277 A; also 120 E, 121 D, 350 D). Whether any material connected with this name assisted the compiler in his amalgamation of the stories it is impossible to say; but if he studied in Paris he would almost certainly have made use of the records of St. Denis.

VI.

The marriage story in *V* 1, for which the Danish accounts furnish no parallel, is abruptly joined to the summary that follows the account of Offa's accession to the throne; and shows no manner of resemblance, in matter or in style, to the first part of the text.

That the two parts were originally distinct is shown by a discrepancy in regard to the hero's age. At the end of the first part Offa is said to have been thirty-four years old. In the beginning of the second part we read "*More iuuenili*," and then "*Post hec aliquot annis elapsis*." *Aliquot* cannot mean less than three, and suggests more; therefore when we put together the two parts,¹ we must conclude that the king was nearly forty before it occurred to his councilors that he should marry, and yet the description of him distinctly implies early youth: "*Etatis enim iuuenilis pubertas, morum maturitas, et urgens regni necessitas necnon et honoris dignitas, itidem postularunt*."² It is inconceivable that they would have waited until the king was past middle age before urging on him these considerations.³

The two most striking characteristics of this story are its immediate connection with the foundation of St. Albans and its apparent identity with the popular mediæval tale of the innocent, persecuted woman.

1. The grounds on which the compiler was justified in introducing this tale in place of the Thrytho story, which originally belonged to *O* 1, will be discussed later; but here the fact is patent that, as it stands, it suits his purpose admirably. By the prayers of a hermit the king's children, who have been killed and mutilated (their hands and feet cut off) in fulfilment of the forged commands, are restored to life; and they and his wife are kept alive by this same hermit, at whose hut Offa finds them. In the excess of the king's gratitude the hermit suggests the founding of a monastery in that place. Whatever the original content of the story may have been, nearly seventy lines at least of the

¹ Cf. *V*, 6, ll. 8, 9, and 43.

² *V*, 6, ll. 47, 48.

³ Suhm attempted to reconcile the Danish and English sources, on the hypothesis that this was a second marriage (*SUHM-GRÆTER*, I, 129, 130).

text may safely be regarded as foreign matter, introduced either by the compiler or by some earlier monkish authority whom he used.¹

2. The tale of the innocent, persecuted woman, of which eighteen mediæval versions, more or less literary, and more than forty versions in popular folklore, are known, finds its earliest representative in the second part of *V*1.² The story has three centers of action: (a) the heroine's native land; (b) her husband's land; (c) the place of the second exile; and an examination of the localization of these shows the original home of the legend. Out of the eighteen mediæval versions:

- (a) in three cases is Rome.
 in five cases is France.
 in one case is Rome and France.
 in one case is Constantinople.
 in two cases is Hungary.
 in one case is Russia.
 in one case is Dacia.
 in three cases is England.
 in one case is uncertain.
- (b) in seven cases is England, Scotland, Wales.
 in three cases is France.
 in one case is Rome.
 in two cases is Greece.
 in one case is Vienna.
 in four cases is uncertain.
- (c) in ten cases is Rome.
 in two cases is France.
 in one case is France and Rome.
 in one case is England.
 in one case is Germany.
 in three cases is not specified.

The heroine's father is in sixteen cases out of eighteen³ a king or emperor, and in nine cases connected with France or Rome, or

¹ The account of the miraculous restoration extends over twenty lines (*V*, 8, ll. 23-46), preceded by the marvel of the children's cries after death (ll. 15-18). Then forty-seven lines are given to the promise of founding the Abbey (9, ll. 26-57, and 10, ll. 1-16). The children become in his eyes martyrs. "Nec sine martirii palma," etc., he says (8, l. 22).

² Cf. SUCHIER, *La Manékine*, pp. xxiii ff.

³ Of the other two: in one, he is Comte d'Anjou; in the other, Duc de Guienne, her mother being daughter to the king of France.

both; her husband in seven cases is king of England, Scotland, or Wales,¹ and the place of the second exile is in ten cases Rome. In the remaining versions the localization is either vague or widely varying. From these facts alone, it would seem that the original tale had to do with the daughter of a king of France or emperor of Rome² (and Charlemagne indeed might have been regarded as either or both), who was exiled and married a king of England, was again exiled and went to Rome. Considering that of the remaining cases several do not specify the localities, while England appears three times as the original home, France three times as the scene of the first exile, and two as the scene of the second (besides Rome and France, in one case), we must conclude that an early and popular form of the tale took the form suggested above.³

The next point to be determined is whether there is any basis for transferring this tale to a king of France or emperor of Rome, from a king of York. The name that at once suggests itself, both as combining the two titles and as a point of attachment for legends, is Charlemagne. The only historical basis for the application to him of the tale of which *V1* is the oldest known version is a sentence of Einhard's referring to his daughters: "dicens, se earum contubernio carere non posse" and "Ac propter hoc, licet alias felix, adversae fortunae malignitatem expertus est; quod tamen ita dissimulavit, ac si de eis nulla umquam alicuius probri suspicio exorta, vel fama dispersa fuisset."⁴

These words seems to imply that disgraceful stories were spread abroad about him,⁵ and in an age when *Apollonius of*

¹ SUCHIER (P. U. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 517, with n.1) claims that Galys = Galicia in Spain; but examples of this spelling referring to Wales are not uncommon.

² Constantinople, Hungary, Dacia, and Russia might have been related to the Byzantine Emperor. The first two may have been suggested by the *Reute* story.

³ It may be still further noted that the main scene of action in six important versions: *V1*, *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople*, *La Manékine*, TRIVET's *Constance*, *La Fille du Roi de France*, and *Emaré*, which are either among the oldest or derived from a primitive tradition, is in England, Scotland, or Wales; in the first four, Northumbria or Mercia.

⁴ *Vita Karoli Imperatoris*, cap. xix. This may allude, however, to the way in which they deceived him.

⁵ A verse written 825 accused Charlemagne of being given up to vice. Like Arthur, he was accused of incest with his own sister. Cf. BOUQUET, V, 399, *Hist. Poét. de Charl.*, 378 ff.; GAUTIER, *Les épopées Françaises* (Paris, 1878-87), III, 65-67. She is called *Berte* in the Venice *Charlemagne*.

Tyre was one of the popular tales,¹ this is by no means surprising.

The importance of this allusion lies in its suggestion that Drida's excuse in *V 2* was not chosen arbitrarily by the compiler, but represents a genuine tale of this sort attached to Charlemagne.

In endeavoring to trace more definitely the relation of the story in *V 1* to the other members of the group, I shall first compare it with the two versions to which it shows the greatest affinity, Nicholas Trivet's tale of *Constance*² and the lay of *Emaré*.³

*V 1**Constance**Emaré*

1. Daughter of king of York condemned to die for refusing the unnatural love of her father; but spared by her murderers and left to perish in the woods.

Daughter of Roman emperor Tiberius Constantine (adventure totally different).

Daughter of King Arthur turned adrift in a rudderless boat for refusing to become his second wife.

2. Princess found by Offa hunting in woods and taken home by him. After some years he marries her for her beauty and virtue.

Princess drifts to shore of England, is found by Constable Elda and taken home by him. The reputation of her beauty and miracles reaches Alla who marries her.

Princess drifts to shore of *Galys*, is found by the seneschal Sir Kadore, serves in his household, and wins the king's love by her demeanor in waiting upon him, and becomes his queen.

3. Some time after his children are born, Offa departs to help the king of Northumbria (to whom he promises his daughter in marriage) against the Scots.

Before his child is born, Alla goes to fight the Scots.

Before his child is born the king of *Galys* goes to help the king of France against the Saracens.

¹Over a hundred Latin MSS are known. In the twelfth century MARIE DE FRANCE alludes to such a story in her *Douz Amanz*; GODFREY OF VITERBO introduces it into his *Pantheon*; the romance of *Jourdain de Blaie* retells the Apollonius tale, placing the scene in the time of Charlemagne.

²*Originals and Analogues* (Chaucer Society, 1872, Part I), pp. 1-53.

³BITSON, *Ancient English Metr. Romances*, II, 204 ff.

V 1

4. The messenger whom Offa sends to announce his victory goes through York, where the queen's father lives, is drugged, and his letter replaced by one commanding that the queen and her children shall be cast into the woods and, with hands and feet cut off, left to die, because she is a witch and has brought defeat upon him.

5. The queen is rescued by a hermit who restores her mutilated children to life and keeps her and them for some years.

6. The king finds his family accidentally while hunting in the forest and promises the hermit to build an abbey there, but afterward breaks his word.

Constance

Messenger sent to announce birth of a son goes through Knaresborough (near York) where Alla's mother lives. She drugs him and replaces his letter by one in which the child is said to be a monster. Upon his return, the letter, in which Alla commands that mother and child shall be cared for, is replaced by one ordering exposure in the boat in which the woman came.

The queen after five years of various adventures arrives at Rome and lives there twelve years at the house of the senator Arsemius, who educates her son.

The king undertakes a penitential pilgrimage to Rome for having in his wrath killed his mother. At Rome he finds his wife and son. His wife then makes herself known to the emperor, her father.

Emaré

Very similar to *Constance*, except that the mother-in-law's place of residence is not specified.

The queen in seven days floats to Rome, where she is taken home by a merchant in whose house she and her son remain for seven years.

Very similar to *Constance*.

The resemblances between these three versions may be summed up in the statement that all treat of the two persecutions of an innocent woman, turned adrift in the forest or on the sea, by a near relation (father or mother-in-law), through the drugging of a messenger and the forging of letters (a letter) in which she is accused of being a witch (of demonic origin). The first exile

is from the father, the second from the husband, to whom after various adventures she is finally restored.

With this common basic plot, there are noticeable several striking differences of detail:

1. The exposure in *V1* is in the forest; in *Constance* and *Emaré*, in a rudderless boat.¹ But *Drida-Petronilla*, who in *V2* plays the part of the innocent, persecuted woman, is turned adrift in a boat.

2. The persecutor in *V1*, in both instances, is the father; in *Constance*, in both cases, a mother-in-law (but not the same);² in *Emaré*, as in the majority of the later versions, it is first by the father, and second by the mother-in-law.

3. In *V1* the whole action is confined to central and northern England (Mercia and Northumbria); in *Constance*, the greater part of it occurs in Northumbria, but it begins and ends at Rome; in *Emaré* it is vague, and though the chief part of the story happens in Britain, both France and Rome are introduced as well.

4. In *V1* the command is twice given to cut off the heroine's hands and feet, although it is not carried out. Her children, however, are thus mutilated and miraculously healed by the hermit. In *Constance* and *Emaré* there is no question of mutilation³ and there is but one child.

5. In *V1* the children are born before the father's departure, hence there is no charge of a monstrous birth, and but one letter is forged; in *Constance* and *Emaré*, and in nearly all the later versions, letters are forged alike during the messenger's outward and return journey.⁴

¹ The later versions of the tale differ, although the majority agree in exposure by sea: eleven as against six in the forest, and one in which each method is used twice. See SUCHER, *La Manékine*, Introduction, especially pp. liv ff.

² The opening incident in the tale of *Constance* appears to be a duplication of the second persecution, borrowed perhaps from some saint's legend, and introduced in order to avoid the popular story. It is, at least, unique among the different versions of the tale, and in its present character can scarcely have been earlier than the time of the Crusades.

³ In *V*, 6, ll. 30-36, the command is simply "eam in desertum solitudinis remote duci, uel pocius trahi, et crudelissima morte condempnatam bestiis ibidem derelinqui;" but the text continues: "seductores . . . miserti pulchritudini illius eam ibidem sine trucidacione et membrorum mutilacione uiuam . . . dimiserunt." In the second case the mutilation is commanded, apparently as a form of punishment. See GRIMM, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, (Leipzig, 1899), II, 291 ff.

⁴ Cf. *V*, 7, ll. 39-44; *Const.*, pp. 27-31; and *Em.*, ll. 508 ff., and 565 ff.

6. In *V1* the rescuer is a hermit; in *Constance*, a Roman senator; in *Emaré*, a Roman merchant.

7. Both *Constance* and *Emaré* contain various episodes not found in *V1*: the discovery of the heroine by the king's steward and her life in his household before she is brought to the notice of the king;¹ and in *Constance*, episodes in connection with her second journey.

8. In *V1* she is after each exile discovered by her husband who is hunting in the forest; in *Constance* and *Emaré* she is first brought to the king's notice through his steward, and is afterward found by him at Rome, whither he has gone on a penitential pilgrimage for the murder of his mother.

In this obvious mixture of elements is it possible to pick out the strands of the separate, original stories?

In the first place, it must be granted that *V1* is both narrow and definite in its localization and logical in the development of its parts. It is the only version in which the second persecution grows naturally out of the first. In *Constance* and *Emaré* (taken as representatives of the class) the connection between the two persecutions seems at first purely arbitrary. The clue as to the manner in which they came to be joined together is found, I think, in the charge brought against the queen, which suggests at once one of the most popular groups of tales in the twelfth century, that of the mortal (king, prince, nobleman) who marries a supernatural being (fairy or ghost). This group of tales divides itself into several classes:

1. Those in which the wife, who is generally caught by a trick, insists upon a taboo, the breaking of which by the husband causes him to lose her.²

2. Those in which she bears children that show marks of their supernatural origin—a fact which the jealous mother-in-law uses to bring about the separation of husband and wife. These stories have usually a happy ending.³

¹ In *Emaré* she serves in the steward's household and attracts attention by her beautiful embroidery (ll. 58-60, 67, 373-96); in *Constance* she works miracles and converts the heathen, and is falsely accused of murder, much as is the heroine in the poem *Florence de Rome*.

² MAP, *De Nug. Cur.*, Distinc. II, cap. xi, xii, xiii; and IV, cap. viii, ix.

³ To this class belong the romances of the Swan cycle. In *Dolopathos* (ed. BRUNET AND MONTAIGLON, Paris, 1856), ll. 9228-39, she is plainly a fay; in *Chanson du Chevalier au*

If, at the time when these tales of the marriage of mortals with supernatural beings were popular, there existed also the story of a daughter who was banished by, or had to flee from, her own father, and if the daughter was silent as to the cause of her exile, the jealous mother-in-law, knowing only that she was found in the woods (or had drifted in a boat from an unknown country), would readily find a means of persecution in inventing the story of a monstrous birth, which might really have occurred, according to the popular notion, had the heroine been what her mother-in-law chose to think her. If this is reasonable, it suggests that two elements enter into the composition of the tale of the innocent, persecuted woman:

1. The daughter (a mortal) persecuted by her own father.
2. A supernatural being wedded to a mortal and persecuted by her mother-in-law.

In keeping with this theory are the facts that, while *V1* represents the first tale in double form, and several forms of the second are known to have existed in the twelfth century, the earliest known version in which they are combined dates from the thirteenth century.

There seems no doubt that the valkyrie of Old Germanic literature had become the swan-maiden and the fay of twelfth-century literature; and that these two beings were at that time regarded as practically the same.

Swan-maidens¹ or fays were usually found by a fountain in the woods. This fact suggests how the story of the wife of *O1*, found in the woods and banished on a charge of witchcraft² came

Cygne et de Godefroid de Bouillon (ed. HIPPEAU, Paris, 1874) her supernatural character is almost lost; in *La Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne* (*Publ. of the Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, IV, 1889) the heroine dies early (ll. 1236 ff.), although she is once called a fay (l. 1635), but the children are exposed in the forest by their grandmother. In *Constance* (p. 29) the child is described: "que ne resembent pas a fourme de homme, mes a vne maladite fourme, hidouse & doloureuse." So in *Emaré*, ll. 536-40.

¹ The *silvestres virgines* of Saxo (ed. HOLDER, 70, ll. 11-26; 76, ll. 8-23; cf. MOGK, 269-271) seem, like valkyries, to determine the fortune of war and like Norns to foresee the future. In the *Lay of Weyland* (*Corp. Poet. Bor.*, I, 169) the fairies are found spinning on the sea-shore, but come and go through *Mirkwood*.

² In *V1* the heroine is alluded to in the forged letter as *perditam et maleficam* (7, l. 50); in *Const.* she is called "malueise esprit en fourme de femme" (pp. 27-29); in *De Nug. Cur.*, IV, ix, which WRIGHT (p. 168) considers the foundation of *V1*, the beautiful girl found weeping in the woods is in reality a *pestilentia*. *Malefica* and *pestilentia* seem to be the equivalents of *venefica*, which, significantly enough, is translated into Old English as

under the influence of swan-maiden tales. The woman exposed in the boat was originally the innocent, persecuted daughter (as Drida pretended to be). But if we are to believe that the valkyrie Thrytho came over the sea, and Bertha, originally a valkyrie, was left to die in the woods, then it might well follow, not only that Drida should find her excuse in the tale of the innocent, persecuted woman, but also that the story of Bertha might have influenced the account of the woman in *V1*.

The nature of this influence it is perhaps impossible to show in detail, since the version of Adenés certainly departed widely from the common accounts, and the version in *V1* is by no means simple and original. However, the general resemblance of situation is noteworthy. An innocent woman is dragged into the forest to be slain, but the murderers, touched by her beauty, leave her uninjured (in *V1* they were to have cut off her hands and feet; in *Berte*, to have cut out her heart). In both cases there is question of a hermit, but his function is different: in *V1* he affords the first night's shelter, after Offa has found the princess; and afterward saves the woman and her children and suggests the founding of the abbey; in *Berte* he refuses the wanderer shelter.¹

Considering, then, the hint of supernatural character in the wife of O1, the resemblance between her situation and that of *Berte*, who was originally a valkyrie, the fact that Drida avails herself of the excuse of the innocent, persecuted woman and that

wælcyrge = *valkyrie* (MEYER, 175; GRIMM, ed. MEYER, 346; also BOSWORTH-TOLLER). The punishment for witchcraft was banishment (LIEBERMANN, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* [Halle, 1898], I, 134, 135). Drida, too, is called *regina malefica* (*V*, 24, ll. 14, 15).

¹ That the *Berte* story influenced the development of the *Constance* group after the time of *V1* seems to appear in several ways: (1) the incident of the bloody knife (*Orig. and Anal.*, pp. 21-23; Adenés, ll. 412-35), though this more closely resembles a similar incident in the *Florence de Rome Le Bone* (*Flor. of Rome*, ll. 1593 ff.) group; (2) the heroine's concealment of her origin, which is common; (3) her sojourn in the household of a nobleman (in *Berte* the nobleman's wife is a *Constance*, ll. 1125-33); (4) her fine embroidery (ll. 1379-1426; cf. *Emaré*, 58-60, 67, 376, 377, 382-84); (5) the burning of the old woman who causes the trouble (ll. 2266, 2303, 2304), which appears in several versions.

Further mixture of the stories is indicated in the fact that the king of York's daughter tells the truth, while Drida, like *Berte*, invents a fiction; and, again, *Constance* is accused of being able to bring destruction upon the land ("qe si ele en la terre demorat, ceo auendreit a guerre et destruccioun de toute la terre par estraunge naciouns," p. 31), as Drida certainly tried to do. And, again, the daughter whom O1 promises to the king of Northumbria is evidently borrowed from O2. She may be the fourth daughter named in the Chertsey charter (*Æthelfþithe* = Althrida? *Æthelswithe*?), BIRCH, I, 251, whom the compiler could not place in *V2*.

many of these tales were later attached to Charlemagne, and in view of the historical association of the names of Offa and Charlemagne also in connection with a Berte, I conclude that all these hints point toward the inference that some form of the *Berte* legend (*Petronilla* being derived either by corruption or wilful variation) has influenced the text of *V1*. But another feature in *V1* is perhaps due to *Berte*. It seems clear to me that the question of mutilation is not an original feature of the tale as it is in *Berte*, for the reason that in the *Constance* group it is often lacking, and where it exists is motivated in such a variety of ways as to suggest that it has been introduced without sufficient reason, while in *Berte*, with some changes of detail, the original motive, which is at once primitive and logical—the demand for the heart, eyes, tongue, or other organs as evidence of death—is regularly preserved.¹

In seven versions² of the story of the innocent, persecuted woman the mutilation feature is lacking altogether. *La Belle Hélène* alone resembles *Berte* in regarding the mutilated member—in this case, stupidly enough, a hand—as a token of death. In *La Manékine*³ the heroine cuts off her own hand, the left, apparently to avoid the hated wedding ring. In several versions she cuts off one hand or both hands because her father had admired their beauty,⁴ and in Einkenkel's *Chronique* she cuts off her hair and scratches her face for the same reason.⁵ In *V1* the mutilation is directly connected with the foundation of the abbey; hence, later narratives would have to explain its introduction in different ways.

¹ In the *Berte* legend a sow's heart or a dog's tongue is used as proof of death (ADENÉS, ll. 656-77; ARÉTIN, pp. 22-25). In the story of Charlemagne's wife, St. Hildegard (BRUSCH, *Chronolog. Monaster. German. Praecip.* (Sulzbach, 1682), 93-97), she is first condemned to be thrown into the river, and the second time to be killed in the forest. The eyes of a young dog (*catulum*) are used as proof of her death.

² *Mai und Beafloz*, *La Comtesse d'Anjou*, *Ystoria Regis Francorum*, *Il Pecorone*, *La Fille du Roi de France*, *Emaré*, and Fazio's *De Origine inter Gallos et Britannos Belli Historia*.

³ In this connection it is interesting to note that in the *miracle* based upon *La Manékine*, the heroine calls herself *Berthequine* or *Bethequine* (*Miracles de Notre Dame* [Paris, 1880, Soc. des Anc. Textes Fr., V, No. 29], ll. 689, 763, 793, 1501). Once the author slips and calls her *manequine* (l. 1519).

⁴ Cf. the story of the nun in JACQUES DE VITRY's *Exempla* (London, 1890), LVII.

⁵ See SUCHIER, *La Manékine*, Introduction, for a summary of all the versions.

The original substance of the tale, then, when stripped of extraneous matter, reduces itself to a double persecution of an innocent daughter and wife by some enemy. Is it possible to trace this story still further toward its source? The suggestion has several times been made that *The Wife's Complaint* is not a separate lyric, but an epic fragment. Conybeare, who did not recognize that the speaker was a woman, mentioned the Hildebrand saga;¹ Grein, that of Genevieve.² Wülcker,³ however, agrees with Ten Brink⁴ in holding that the poem is an independent lyric, although he suggests that it belongs to the Offa saga, if to any. Mr. Brooke⁵ holds a similar view.

Wülcker's chief objection to considering this poem a part of the Offa saga, aside from its apparent completeness, was the absence of the child or children. But these in *V 1* play no part except as they are connected with the foundation of St. Albans.⁶

Ten Brink sums up the question as follows:

In den übrigen [i. e., omitting *Deor's Lament*] Denkmälern der altenglischen Lyrik lässt sich eine Beziehung auf die Heldensage wenigstens nicht nachweisen und ist auch nicht wahrscheinlich. An Eigennamen fehlt es in ihnen durchaus; die Andeutungen über Personen, Orte, Begebenheiten sind ziemlich allgemein gehalten, oft recht dunkel. Ob nun aber diese Dichtungen durchweg als unmittelbare Gefühlsäusserungen des jedesmaligen Dichters zu fassen seien und nicht vielmehr die Empfindung eines Dritten darin objectiviert werde, scheint keineswegs so sicher, wie man wohl angenommen hat.

The objections here indicated I shall take up in order; and first, to show whether or not there is any relation between the Offa saga and *The Wife's Complaint*, I shall quote the latter in full as it stands in the Grein-Wülcker text.

Ic þis giedd wrece bi me ful geomorre,
 minre sylfre sið; ic þæt secgan mæg
 hwæt ic yrmþa gebad, siþþan ic up weox,
 niwes opþe ealdes, no ma þonne nu :

¹ *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (London, 1826), 245, n. 1.

² *Bibliothek der A. S. Poesie* (Göttingen, 1857), I, 363.

³ *Grundriss*, III, §§ 172, 173 (Leipzig, 1885), pp. 224-26.

⁴ *Geschichte der Eng. Lit.* (ed. BRANDL, 1899), 72.

⁵ *Eng. Lit. from the Beginning to the Norm. Conq.* (New York, 1898), 156.

⁶ Wülcker suggests that the charge on which the wife was banished was either witchcraft or faithlessness in love; the former is the charge in *V 1*.

- 5 a ic wite wonn minra wræcſiþa!¹
 Ærest min hlaford gewat heonan of leodum
 ofer yþa gelac: hæfde ic uhtceare,
 hwær min leodfruma londes wære.
 Ða ic me feran gewat, folgað secan
- 10 wineleas wræcca for minre weaþearfe:²
 ongunnen þæt þæs monnes magas hycgan
 þurh dyrne geþoht, þæt hy todælden unc,
 þæt wit gewidost in woruldrice
 lifdon laðlicost *and* mec longade.³
- 15 Het mec hlaford min her heard niman:
 ahte ic leofra lyt on þiſsum londſtede,
 holdra freonda. Forþon is min hyge geomor,
 ða ic me ful gemæcne monnan funde,
 heardſæligne, hygegeomorne,
- 20 mod miþendne, morþor hycgendne,
 bliþe gebæro. Ful oft wit beotedan,⁴
 þæt unc ne gedælde nemne deað ana
 owiht elles: eft is þæt onhworfen,
 is nu ſwa hit no wære
- 25 freondſcipe uncer! Sceal ic feor ge neah
 mines fela leofan fæhðu dreogan!
 Heht mec mon wunian on wuda bearwe
 under actreo in þam eorðſcræfe:
 eald is þes eorðſele, eal ic eom oflongad;
- 30 ſindon dena dimme, duna uphea,

¹ In these lines it is clear that the speaker is a woman who has suffered many hardships, both new and old, since she grew up, never more than at the time when she is speaking. L. 5 is not clear; but the meaning seems to be, "Always I got suffering through my exiles," i. e., "My suffering has always come through exiles."

² The first five lines form an introduction. The details begin with *Ærest*. Her sorrow is double; first, because her lord departed across the sea; and then because she herself, a friendless exile, had to depart to seek subsistence (literally, a *retinue* or *following of servants*, or *service as a follower*) or service (elsewhere), being in dire necessity.

³ These lines explain clearly, what the preceding passage left vague, that the separation of husband and wife was brought about deliberately by the man's relations, apparently through hostility to the speaker (l. 14), that she might be made to suffer.

⁴ From this passage it is clear that her present dwelling was the result (direct or indirect) of her husband's command, and that her sorrow comes through her discovery that the husband whom she loved ("I had found a man well suited to me"—i. e., a fit consort, l. 18) had been harboring murderous intentions toward herself with a pretense at "blithe bearing" or kindly demeanor (cf. *Beowulf*, l. 436). Ll. 16 and 17 are not clear: *þiſsum londſtede* seems to refer more naturally to her place of exile; but *ahte* is past tense. I interpret the sentence, "I had too few dear ones in this country—too few beloved friends," to mean that her friends in her husband's country were not numerous enough to prevent her exile. This thought, together with the earlier assertion that it was her husband's kinsmen who had conspired to separate her from her lord, suggests that she was a stranger.

In l. 15, for *her heard*, Grein reads (1) *her eard*, (2) *herh-eard*=*habitatulum in memoribus*.

- bitre burgtunas, brerum beaweaxne,
 wic wynna leas. Ful oft mec her wraþe begeat¹
 fromsiþ frean. Frynd sind on eorþan
 leofe lifgende, leger weardiað,
 35 þonne ic on uhtan ana gonge
 under actreo geond þas eorðscrafu!
 þær ic sittan mot sumorlangne dæg,
 þær ic wepan mæg mine wræcsiþas.
 earfoþa fela, forþon ic æfre ne mæg
 40 þære modceare minre gerestan
 ne ealles þas longapes, þe mec on pissum life begeat.²
 A scyle geong mon wean geomormod,
 heard heortan geþoht, swylce habban sceal
 bliþe gebæro, eac þon breostceare,
 45 sinsorgna gedreag: sy æt him sylfum gelong
 eal his worulde wyn, sy ful wide fah
 feorres folclondes, þæt min freond siteð
 under stanhliþe storme behrimed,
 wine werigmod, wætre beflowen
 50 on dreorsele! Dreogeð se min wine
 micle modceare; he gemon to oft
 wynlicran wic. Wa bið þam þe sceal
 of langope leofes abidan!³

¹ These lines seem clear in meaning. They express her bitter sense of the contrast between the time when she with her husband exchanged vows of undying love and the present when she far or near must bear his hatred. They add the important detail that she is living in a cave in the forest. L. 27 is significant in that it seems to indicate that the husband's command did not come from him directly (in which case there might have been a chance for explanation or appeal), but indirectly through others (*Heht mec mon*).

² The meaning of ll. 32, 33, may be that her husband's departure has often made her sorrowful (*wraþe* being either the adverb or the feminine accusative of the adjective, agreeing with *mec*); but the sense seems to me to be rather, that it brought hostility upon her. However, I see no satisfactory construction for the dative of the noun *wraþ*. Further, the interpretation of the form in the text, as used absolutely in allusion to the mother-in-law, is not warranted by any other passage in the poem. Conybeare and Thorpe translated ll. 33, 34, to mean that her friends were dead (thus bringing a contrast almost Homeric into l. 34); but later interpretations (Grein, Brooke, Bosworth-Toller) make the entire passage, ll. 33-41, a contrast between the state of happy lovers and her own forlorn condition—a contrast that is in perfect keeping with the situation of the banished wife in *V1*.

³ Whether these lines are interpreted as a curse upon the author of her exile, or as a sorrowful prediction of the trouble that would come upon her husband, they are in keeping with the situation. The chief difficulty of the passage is in making a connection between ll. 42-47 which seem general in character (but these, inasmuch as they show a certain parallelism of phrasing to ll. 19-21, refer perhaps to the husband) and ll. 47-52, which contain a definite description of the husband in circumstances (apparently referred to the future) similar to her own. A possible explanation of the sudden turn of thought I will suggest later (see p. 53, n. 1, below). For different interpretations see TRAUTMANN, in *Anglia*, XVI, 222-25, and ROEDER, in MORSBACH's *Studien zur Eng. Phil.* (Halle, 1899), Heft 4, *Die Familie bei den Angelsachsen*, 112-19.

The plot suggested by this poem shows a strong likeness to the situation in *V 1* as it stood after the second exile of the heroine; and, curiously enough, most of the points in which the two seem to differ can be paralleled from later versions of the innocent, persecuted woman tale. The chief of these are:

1. "Ofer ypa gelac" (l. 7). In *Hélène*, *La Manékine*, *Emaré*, and other versions the husband crosses the sea.

2. "Feran gewat" (l. 9) may seem to imply voluntary action; but this is contradicted by ll. 15 and 27. In several versions, *Hélène*, *Mai und Beafloer*, *La Manékine*, *La Comtesse d'Anjou*, *Il Pecorone*, and *Novella della Figlia del Re di Dacia*, the first exile is in reality a flight, not a punishment.

3. "Folgað secan" (l. 9). In many versions the woman earns her own livelihood during the first exile; in *Emaré* she does beautiful embroidery and waits upon the table; in *La Fille du Roi de France* she becomes a cowherd and also does exquisite needlework; in *Novella della Figlia del Re di Dacia*, during the second exile she is a nurse. Sometimes she takes refuge in a convent; and again, during the second exile, she finds charity with a hermit, a merchant or a Roman senator. Berte, too, dwells in the household of a nobleman and earns her living by teaching embroidery.¹

4. "Monnes magas" (l. 11) agrees better with all the later versions in which the mother-in-law is the persecutor; but if the command came indirectly from the king through the nobles (probably enough kinsmen of his), she might well, being ignorant of the cause of her exile, have accused them of conspiracy.² Certainly the situation and mood of the poem accord with the form of the saga contained in *V 1*.

The second objection, the absence of names, can best be considered in connection with some study of the modifications which Old English poetry suffered at the hands of those who preserved it. That the bulk of what remains is religious is shown at once by the fact that of the four chief MSS, the Junian and Vercelli MSS contain nothing but religious matter, the Exeter Book

¹ See p. 41, n. 1, above.

² Cf. *V*, 7, l. 51, in which the king said that he had married the outcast "absque meorum consensu."

(barring some of the *Riddles*) contains almost nothing that has not at least been edited by someone whose chief concern was the saving of the soul,¹ while Cotton Vitellius A XV contains, in addition to the originally pagan but much edited epic *Beowulf*, the religious epic *Judith*.

The Old English epics, as growing out of the ancient mythology that Christianity was at that time struggling to supplant, have fared worst. Of the great mass of epic literature that seems to be implied in *Widsith*, only one poem, *Beowulf*, has been preserved in a form approaching completeness, and fragments of two others, *Waldere* and the *Fight at Finnsburg*,² have been accidentally saved in the bindings of books.

Clearly the monks of the ninth and tenth centuries had two ways of dealing with the old pagan literature:

1. To supply its place among the people, by imitating its manner with religious matter,³ as is seen in the Caedmonian poems, and *Elene*, *Judith*, *Andreas*, *Juliana*, *Christ*, and *Guthlac*, especially.

2. To edit it in such a way as to make it more or less innocuous in its effects, as is seen in the *Beowulf*.

The chief proof of this second attitude of mind lies in the fact that, while owing to natural accidents, much Old English literature has been lost, almost nothing that is purely heathen has been preserved. An examination of the Exeter Book, collected by Bishop Leofric or under his direction, and by him presented to Exeter Cathedral, will illustrate this point.

At first glance, it seems that the Exeter Book, notwithstanding its ecclesiastical origin, contains various secular pieces. But the *Phoenix*, the *Whale*, the *Panther*, and the *Partridge* have all been interpreted by means of Christian allegory; while the *Riddles* are so various in character, and their interpretation is so often a matter for doubt, that it is not very safe to draw conclusions as to

¹ In THORPE'S *Codex Exoniensis* (London, 1842), 424 pages out of 498 (500 are numbered, but two contain a poem taken from the Vercelli MS for purposes of comparison) are either religious in their origin or contain allusions to Christianity.

² This may have been only a short heroic ballad — the sort, however, out of which epics developed.

³ Bede's story of Caedmon distinctly implies this attitude of mind (*Hist. Eccles.*, lib. iv, cap. 24).

their content. It seems clear, however, that they were a popular form of amusement in the monasteries; and, whatever their ultimate sources, received the seal of approval for that reason.¹

There remain for consideration: *Widsith*, *Deor's Lament*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *The Wife's Complaint*, *The Husband's Message*, and *The Ruin*.

It is at once clear that *The Seafarer* has been used for purposes of allegory (ll. 64-115) much as was the case with the *Phoenix* and the *Physiologus* poems. *The Wanderer* has a religious setting, consisting of prologue and epilogue (ll. 1-5, 110-15) that suggests the remedy for the sorrows lamented in the poem itself. It also contains several ethical passages, especially ll. 58-72, and 106-10, which are akin in thought, and sometimes in phrasing, to portions of the *Blickling Homilies* (cf. especially pp. 59, 99, 115, 195, ed. Morris, E. E. T. S., 58). *The Ruin* is a fragment, showing a strong resemblance in thought and sentiment to a passage in *The Wanderer* (ll. 73-105). The text of *The Husband's Message* is imperfect, but l. 31 contains a distinctly Christian allusion, which may have considerably affected the meaning of the broken passage. *Deor's Lament* contains one stanza (ll. 28-34) that is obviously a Christian interpolation, which is not unlike the mood of *The Wife's Complaint*, ll. 42-47. Mr. Brooke (*Early Eng. Lit.*, 1892, 7) says of *Deor's Lament*: "I suspect we owe the preservation of this lyric to the zeal of the interpolator."

Widsith has certainly been tampered with, witness the Christian allusions in ll. 131-34, and 141-43, and the introduction of biblical nations into ll. 82, 83. *The Wife's Complaint* then is the only poem in the Exeter Book (barring the fragmentary *Ruin* and the *Riddles*) that has not to a certain extent been edited.

Widsith, with its catalogue of heroic cycles, may well have been preserved for the information that it contains; but *The Wife's Complaint*,² aside from its lack of the Christian element, at

¹ MR. SCHOFIELD has interpreted the "First Riddle" as a fragment related in matter to the *Volsunga saga* (*Publ. of the Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, XVII, No. 2, 262-95).

² The hortatory tone of ll. 42-47 may perhaps point to an attempt at introducing the didactic element (cf. *Beowulf*, l. 20). "Swā seal [geong g] uma," etc. A similar thought occurs in *The Seafarer*, 109-11, in which *seal* is followed by *scyle* without any apparent reason for change of mood: "stieran mod *seal* strongum mode" and "*scyle* monna gehwyle mid gemete healdan," etc. Cf. also *Gnomic Verses* (Exeter MS), 178.

once groups itself with *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* and with the fragmentary *Husband's Message* and *Ruin*. All these poems share the peculiarity of implying a definite dramatic situation of which the details are more or less obscure, and an entire absence of names of persons and places to assist in the interpretation.

This second feature may perhaps be understood after a comparison of the Old English *Phoenix* with its source, the Latin poem attributed to Lactantius. Here the Christian's method of dealing with pagan mythology is clear: he tampers with all allusions to classical divinities and personages, omitting them altogether where he cannot easily introduce the name of his Deity in their place.¹

This method of treatment suggests that the names in the elegies may have been omitted for the same reason, i. e., to get rid of the pagan associations in adapting the poems to a Christian audience.

The third objection to regarding the poem as an epic fragment, the general character and the obscurity of the allusions to persons, places, and circumstances, may be answered after consideration of the first two. They are general in so far as they allude to a familiar situation, in regard to which too much detail would not have interested an audience;² and they are obscure only when we try to interpret them without reference to a particular set of circumstances.

I find various difficulties in the way of regarding *The Wife's Complaint* as a complete and independent lyric. Setting aside the fact that this point of view involves the hypothesis that a peculiarly modern form of verse developed in Saxon England centuries before it appeared elsewhere in Europe, and is not to be traced in English literature (aside from these five elegies) before the eighteenth century, there is still the problem of deciding whether the poet represents the speaker³ as an imaginary person

¹ For example, Deucalion's flood (l. 14) becomes the biblical flood (ll. 41-46); *Aurora* *rosea luce* *Phoebe nascentis* *Sol* (ll. 35-43) become: *Fæder fyrngeweorc* *torht tacen Godes* (ll. 95, 96).

² The situation itself is not vague; it is peculiar. But it is summed up in order to keep the stress on the emotions. Mr. Bradley in the *Academy* (March 24, 1888, p. 198), says that the obscurity may be due to the absence of context and the monodramatic form.

³ The old view that the speaker is the poet himself seems to be giving way to the belief that he is speaking dramatically for a third person (cf. TEN BRINK, *loc. cit.*, and KER, *The Dark Ages* [Edinburgh and London, 1904], 266).

whose sufferings are at once complicated and obscure, or as an historic being who is either forgotten or no longer connected with this situation. In the former case it is difficult to see how the lines could ever have been clearly understood, or have appealed to an audience brought up on epics; in the latter, there seems no sufficient reason for the absence of all names.

But indeed, as Ten Brink admits, all these lyrics have an epic character in that they express, not a moment, but an enduring situation—perhaps a life-history;¹ and they are written in an epic verse, set over against *Deor's Lament* and the *First Riddle* (*Signy's Lament*), which have a refrain. For these reasons, I hold that they are specimens of the *giedd* or short monologue arising from a dramatic situation, such as occurs frequently in *Beowulf*. This does not necessarily mean that they all at some time formed part of a long epic, although this may have been the case;² but it does mean that they were composed in epic times for epic audiences about heroic personages.

For these reasons it seems to me highly probable that *The Wife's Complaint*, which agrees in all essentials with the marriage story found attached to O1 in V1, is an epic lay; or, it may be, a fragment,³ which was selected on utilitarian grounds by Bishop Leofric of Exeter or his assistants, but was never adapted

¹ *Geschichte* (ed. BRANDL), 73.

² This phase of the subject demands much further study. I may just add that *The Wanderer* shows resemblances to one or two situations in *Beowulf*: that described by Wiglaf (2864-91), and perhaps that of Hengest (1125 ff.). *The Ruin* resembles *The Wanderer* (73-105), and has been compared with the lament in *Beowulf*, 2247-66. *The Seafarer* suggests in some respects the saga of Ragnar Lodbrok; and again, in its contrast of moods, the fragmentary Norse dialogue of Niord and Skadi:

"Quoth Niord: I loathe the mountains; I was not long there, nine nights only. The howl of the wolves seemed evil to me after the song of the swans. Quoth Skadi: I cannot sleep in the resting-places of the sea (shore) for the shrieking of the sea-fowls. The mew, coming in from the sea, wakes me every morning" (cf. *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, I, 126, with Saxo's song of Hading and his wife, ed. HOLDER, 33, ll. 5-24, 28-38, which shows some resemblances of phrasing to passages in *The Seafarer*).

³ Suchier favors the hypothesis of an Old English poem as the basis of many of the versions of the innocent, persecuted woman tale (*La Manékine*, pp. lxxiii ff.). BÄCKSTRÖM (*Svenska Folkb.* [Stockholm, 1845, 1848], pp. v, 184) had previously maintained that the *Constance* story goes back as far as the eighth or ninth century. Trivet's version alludes to "les chaunsounez que les pucels de la terre fesoient & chantoyent de lui" (*Constance*, p. 27), which suggests that he knew perhaps lyrics on the subject. From another point of view, Mr. BRADLEY in the *Academy* for March 24, 1888, p. 198, remarks upon the strong resemblance in motive and treatment between the *First Riddle* and *The Wife's Complaint*. If the former is epic in its relationship, why not the latter?

to a Christian purpose¹ as were the poems that bear a strong resemblance to it, *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*.

Whether it belonged originally to Offa or was afterward drawn into the cycle that gathered about his name is a further question suggested by the fact that Trivet tells the story of Ælle of Northumbria, who died in 588—a question that is not perhaps to be answered without much consideration of the sagas that have disappeared except as they have left traces in mediæval Latin. On this point, however, I will observe that while in *Constance* the localization is narrower and more definite (the neighborhood of York), thus suggesting that the original hero was Ælle, and that the story came to be told of O 1 through the fact that Ælle was

¹ It is perhaps worth consideration whether the poem, following *The Wife's Complaint* in the MS, *The Last Judgment*, can be related to it. The former poem is written on fols. 115, 115b, and the first six lines of the latter are also contained, all but the last word, on fol. 115b. As far as MR. GOLLANCZ's edition extends, the end of a poem in the MS is almost always marked :-:7, or even more elaborately; while the end of a section of a poem is marked only :7. Commonly there is a space of two lines between two poems; but sometimes there is only a line or part of a line, as is the case between sections.

Chancellor Edmonds of Exeter Cathedral has kindly examined the MS in regard to *The Wife's Complaint* and writes that *abidan* (l. 53) ends a line. The next begins *Ðæt gelimpan sceall þette* (*Last Judgment*, l. 1), with a single capital, and leaves a space, while *lagu* begins the line following. The evidence of the MS then is not conclusive in favor of a new poem beginning at this point; but is, if anything, against it. The chief reasons for holding that the two poems belong together are:

(1) *The Last Judgment* begins with an account of a flood that suggests an application of the flood scene in which the woman pictures her husband:

“ Ðæt gelimpan sceal, þette lagu floweð
flood ofer foldan: feores bið æt ende
anra gehwylcum. Oft mæg se þe wile
in his sylfes sefan soð gēþencan!
Hafað him gēþinged hider beoden user
on þeām mæstan dæge, mægencyninga (fol. 116a) hyhst.
wile þonne forbærnan brego moncynnes
lond mid lige.”

— *Last Judgment*, ll. 1-8.

(2) The general thought that the wicked shall be judged severely, and the good that suffer in this world comforted, might well have been suggested by the theme of *The Wife's Complaint*.

(3) The emphasis laid upon the joyless home—the sorrowful journey—that must be taken by him that betrays his friends (ll. 23-26) is again suggestive of *The Wife's Complaint* (cf. also ll. 81-88).

(4) The general course of thought in *The Last Judgment* is far more easily derived from *The Wife's Complaint* than is the second part of *The Seafarer* from the first, to which, indeed, it shows no manner of relation and is moreover joined in the middle of a line (64) without any connection of ideas. The poet says that his thoughts turn seaward:

“ ofer holma gelagu; forþon me hatran sind
dryhtnes dreamas þonne þis deade lif.”

Considering the general character of the Exeter Book, I think it less strange that *The Last Judgment* should be a moral or religious tag to *The Wife's Complaint* than that this situation, which suggests so naturally a religious application, should be the only instance of heathen poetry copied (always excepting some of the *Riddles*) without apparent object, although showing signs of editorial supervision at least in the omission of all names.

the son of an Yffi,¹ this Ælle having become confused with the third king of that name, who undoubtedly does figure in popular lore² (Ælla), who was slain at York in 867. In the absence, however, of any testimony to show that the second Ælle was the subject of saga *The Wife's Complaint* must belong to Offa (O 1), if to either of the two. Again, *La Belle Hélène*, which, with all its confusion of names and places, preserves the scene of action mainly in Northumbria, and seems to be definitely and distinctly connected with the monastic foundation at Tours, probably had its origin at Tours from sources derived from York³ in which the story of the innocent wife had come to be influenced by some legend of St. Helen, mother of Constantine,⁴ perhaps through a confusion of Tiberius Constantine with Constantine the Great. Further, when Ælle who was slain at York had become a legendary figure, he was perhaps confused with the earlier Ælle, son of Yffi, whose date was sufficiently near to that of Tiberius Constantine and Maurice; and that Yffi was therefore identified with Offa, and Ælle substituted later for him.

Whether the story represented by the Thrytho tale in *Beowulf* (the primitive version) and that of which the oldest form known may be *The Wife's Complaint* (V 1), were originally the same, it is difficult to decide. The later *Beowulf* version is in all probability fundamentally the same as the *Drida* tale, which is distinct from the original form of the *Constance* legend, as Suchier observed.⁵ But while the identification of Constance with the heroine of V 1 and *The Wife's Complaint* rests upon reasonable grounds, in the case of the primitive version of the Thrytho tale, the only facts that stand out clearly—her fierce pride that led her to “work people-bales” (i. e., to kill men whose death would be a disaster to the people) and her journey across the sea—make

¹ Cf. the *Uffo* of Saxo and Svenio.

² Cf. SAXO (ed. HOLDER, 305, l. 11; 312, ll. 33, 36; 313, l. 39; 314, l. 11; 315, ll. 6, 11, 19, 32); and GAIMAR, *L'Estorie des Engles* (Rolls Series, 1888), I, ll. 2699-2836 and pp. 328-38. For his connection with the saga hero Ragnar Lodbrok, cf. *Corpus Poet. Bor.*, II, 339-53.

³ Cf. a letter from Alcuin to Charlemagne urging that his books may be brought from York to him at Tours, so that they may be known in France as well as in England (JAFFÉ, 346).

⁴ Who had also a sister Constantia, who married a barbarian king and had a somewhat tragic and romantic history. See GIBBON, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 1896), I, 401, n. 23, 425, 440; II, 206.

⁵ P. v. B., *Beitr.*, IV, 520, 521.

against the identification of the two. There is no indication in the text that the heroine of *The Wife's Complaint* was a valkyrie, while in *V 1* the supernatural element is so obscure that it may have been reflected from the *Drida* or the *Bertha* of popular lore.

VII.

The chief of these oral traditions that the compiler used undoubtedly referred to Offa of "Ongle" who seems to have been included in a cycle in association with Garmund, Hildebrand, and Wade especially,¹ and through them with Weland, Widia, Hama, and Theodoric.²

There is no evidence to show that this heroic matter was ever worked up into a single epic. The confusion of the compiler's text, together with his obvious efforts to distinguish between O 1 and O 2, points rather to an unfixed mass of floating traditions, some of which, at least, were probably in poetical form. Still, on the whole, he has managed (with one exception, the *Drida* tale) to attach the epic matter to O 1; but his account of O 2, highly colored as it is, does not lack hints of the existence of "uncertain and apocryphal material," such as the account of the Welsh Wars, and the Petronilla tale, which he has in part omitted and in part attempted to combine with other sources. It may be that *The Wife's Complaint* is the only surviving fragment of an epic on O 1, to which allusion is made in *Widsith* and *Beowulf*; but there is no evidence to show that the stories of the combat and of the marriage were ever combined. On the other hand, it seems to me highly probable that O 2 became a legendary figure soon after his death, partly perhaps through his own exploits, but more through his connection with Charlemagne and through the romantic career of his daughter Eadburg, and that by the twelfth century, epic material concerning O 1 was being converted into romance of which O 2 was the central figure.

But the process was never completed. Had O 2 lived earlier,

¹Garmund, Offa, *Beowulf*; Garmund (= Waermund), Offa, Hildebrand, (Sueno), *V 1*; Hildebrand, Wade, *Wade* fragment; Wade (= Gado), Offa, (Suanus), *De Nugis Curialium*.

²That these were known to Old English literature is clear from *Widsith*, *Deor's Lament*, and *Waldhere*. Their relation to Riganus (Rig?), Mitunnus (Mithotyn?), Aliel (Abisl or Alewih?), Otta (Öttar?) and Milio, I have not been able to determine; but the entire list opens up a great range of literature.

we might have had an amalgamation similar to that of Beowa and Beowulf. As it is, epic-making was dead long before the Conquest; and the fresh literary impulse that came with the Normans found little to do with the old Saxon heroes. A few tales were transformed into the *lai* or *chanson de geste* or *roman d'aventure*—*Havelok*, *Horn*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Bevis of Hampton*; but *Wade* was lost and also, I believe, a similar mass of popular traditions about Offa, of which the St. Albans compiler has saved us some few crumbs.

This study, from the size and intricacy of the subject, is necessarily incomplete and tentative; but I believe that further investigation of the mediæval chronicles in connection with the remains of vernacular literature might perhaps recover something of old tales concerning Hereward, Waltheof, Edric the Wild, Ragnar Lodbrok, Athelstan, and others. If this could be done, it would be well worth while, in that it would deepen and broaden our knowledge of the meaning of life for some of the long procession whose years have passed into "yesterdays many."

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ERRORS AND EMENDATIONS IN PART I.

- P. 1, n. 7, read UKERT for UKENT.
 P. 3, n. 1, read -50 for -54.
 P. 7, n. 3, l. 5, read (*ibid.*, 539) . . . (*ibid.*).
 P. 10, n. 3, l. 2, read 250 for 249.
 P. 13, n. 1, l. 2, read *Alcuiniana* for *Alcuni*.
 P. 17, middle column, insert 11.
 P. 20, l. 33, read *planies* for *planes*.
 P. 28, n. 1, l. 1, omit *-hearted*; l. 3, read *Hjerte* for *Hjærte*.
 P. 29, n. 5, l. 10, read *is Offa's son*, *Angelbeow*; l. 12, read *Geat* for *Great*; l. 26, add: For errors due to mistaking epithets for names in the Nennius genealogies, see *Y Cymmrodor* (London, 1888), IX, 149, 169 ff.
 P. 30, n. 1, l. 7, read LIUTPRAND (lib. VI, cap. iv), for JOHN OF SALISBURY (*Polycrat.*, VIII, 12).
 P. 31, n. 5, read *Beovulf* for *Beowulf*.
 P. 35, n. 3, l. 4, read 249 for 219.
 P. 37, l. 19, read *Qualmhul* for *Qualmwæld*; n. 2, l. 2, read *æ* for *ae*.
 P. 38, n. 1, l. 2, read *Eadwardes* for *Eadwardes*; n. 2 and n. 3, read *æ* for *ae*.
 P. 39, l. 7, read *se* for *sē*; n. 8, read 1004, 1005 for 1002, 1003; l. 7, read *rudon* for *rūdon*.
 P. 40, l. 11, after *year* add *after 994*; n. 1, l. 1, read *V* for *Y*; l. 2, read *wælstowe* for *wælstowe*; n. 2, l. 4, read 20 for 24; n. 3, read 993 for 937.
 P. 44, l. 9, read *V1* for *V7*; n. 3, read *Grimm* for *Grimm's*, and XI for XL; n. 5, l. 5, add: **KEMBLE** (*Codex Diplomaticus*, Index) gives *Rugganbroc*, Warwickshire.
 P. 47, n. 4, add: Cf. also *Y Cymmrodor*, IX, 149.
 P. 48, n. 1, omit *Halfrun*.